

CANNIBAL LOGIC: LATIN AMERICA UNDER THE SIGN OF AN *OTHER* THINKING

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A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of English and Comparative Literature.

Chapel Hill
2012

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ABSTRACT

MARCO ALEXANDRE DE OLIVEIRA:
Cannibal Logic: Latin America Under the Sign of an *Other* Thinking
(Under the co-direction of Federico Luisetti and Walter Mignolo)

This dissertation presents the theory and practice of a cannibal logic as the sign of an *other* thinking in Latin America. Following the argument of an essay by the Brazilian poet and critic Haroldo de Campos, which discusses the relations between Latin American and European art and culture in terms of both “dialogue” and “difference,” it departs from the premise that a significant part of the imaginary of the Americas throughout the history of modernity as colonality has been marked by the emblematic figure of the cannibal and the rhetorical trope of cannibalism as a discourse of *otherness*. As such, it explores the cannibalization of the cannibal and/or cannibalism in Brazilian *modernismo* and the formulation of a post-modernist “anthropophagic reason” by the “new barbarians” that would herald the emergence of an *other* (neo) avant-garde under development in Latin America. It thereby considers the evolution of both a “new poetry,” which would seek to deconstruct Eurocentrism, and a “new cinema,” which would aim to decolonize the Third World, as productions of a “new civilization” and as illustrations of a revolutionary (cultural) cannibalism that is ultimately contextualized in post-modern and post-colonial theory and criticism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would hereby like to acknowledge Federico Luisetti and Walter Mignolo for their invaluable direction, Gregg Flaxman for his instrumental orientation, Juan Carlos González-Espitia for his insightful contribution, and Monica Rector for her helpful participation. I would also like to thank Eric Downing for his significant inspiration, and both Augusto de Campos and Anna Karinne Ballalai for their gracious accommodation. I would finally like to express my appreciation to Celso de Oliveira, Bernie de Oliveira, and Teresa Barreto Domingues for all their love and support.

DEDICATION

In honor of Samuel Ashley Brown (1923-2011), devourer of art and culture.

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Tarsila do Amaral, *Antropofagia* (“Anthropophagy”) – 1929

“But we never admitted the birth of logic among us.”

– Oswald de Andrade

“Somewhere between sacrifice and playfulness, prison and transgression, submission to the code and aggression, obedience and rebellion, between assimilation and expression – there, in this apparently empty space, its temple and its clandestinity, is where the anthropophagous ritual of Latin American discourse is constructed.”

– Silviano Santiago

INTRODUCTION

“Perhaps these studies had amounted to nothing. But they are very close to that nothing which alone makes it possible for something to be useful [...] This is the resolute, fanatical mien which students have when they study; it is the strangest mien imaginable”

– Walter Benjamin

“There is no exercise of the intellect which is not, in the final analysis, useless.”

– Jorge Luis Borges

This dissertation explores the theory and practice of a cannibal logic in Latin American art and culture. It appropriates the argument and transforms the title of an essay by the Brazilian poet and critic Haroldo de Campos, “Da razão antropofágica: A Europa sob o signo da devoração” (“Anthropophagic Reason: Europe Under the Sign of Devoration”), which discusses the relations between Latin American and European culture in terms of both “dialogue” and “difference.” It departs from the premise that a significant part of the imaginary of the Americas throughout the history of modernity as coloniality has been marked by the emblematic figure of the cannibal and the rhetorical trope of cannibalism as a discourse of *otherness*. As such, representations of the cannibal and/or cannibalism are present in cartography, ethnography, and philosophy from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, and in art and literature from the Baroque to Romanticism. If the origins of the figure of the cannibal and the trope of cannibalism

reveal a European fantasy of an Amerindian reality, the advent of an alternative modernism in Latin America would in turn reflect the transfiguration of the cannibal from taboo into totem, and the transformation of cannibalism from a discourse of colonialism to a counter-discourse of decolonization.

Modernism was both a moment and a movement marked by experimentations in language, and especially the representation of language in writing. At the limits or margins of such a mo(ve)ment, writing extended beyond the boundaries of literature into the sphere of the visual arts, and the apparent schism between writing and drawing, word and image, was challenged by a realization of the materiality of the word as image and the potentiality of the image as text. Such a visualization of writing would, as such, describe a culminating moment in the history of a modern era that had subordinated the written to the spoken word, for it signaled the re-emergence of writing as a *graphic* art. From pictographic and logographic techniques to photographic and cinematographic technologies, new forms of writing reflected radical changes in the arts that had occurred under the banners of innovative avant-garde movements and the signatures of inventive artists. Inasmuch as Modernism developed concurrently in Europe and the Americas, though the former traditionally constitutes the “center” and the latter the “periphery,” the innovations of Latin American artists, writers, and/or movements are characterized not only by various forms of dialogue with, and response to, European modernism and the avant-garde, but also by a revolutionary form of cultural “cannibalism” which describes and/or prescribes a subversive practice of critical appropriation and original transformation. Ultimately, a convergence of developments in art, literature, and cinema inscribes *difference* and/or *otherness* at the center

of an eccentric Latin American identity-as-alterity that rewrites, or redraws, its own *alter-native* image of a New World.

If innovations in the arts have indeed *graphed* the very limits and margins of writing, what of the new writing that emerges or develops at the outer limits and margins of modern Occidental culture? How is this writing *different*, and how does it communicate an *other* language? As a study of the new forms of language and/or modes of writing developed by an *other* (neo) avant-garde in Latin America, this dissertation is limited to a discussion of the (cultural) cannibalism exemplified by the “new poetry” and “new cinema” of the “new barbarians” of a “new civilization.” The term “new barbarians” refers to the Latin American artists and/or writers who are cannibalizing their European counterparts, here in the forms of Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo, while the term “new civilization” refers to the culture(s) of a New World re-created by the theory and practice of (cultural) cannibalism. Why delimit the scope of the dissertation to Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo? Both Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo are movements that exemplify the dialogical and/or dialectical relations between Latin American and European art and/or culture; the founders of both Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo actually refer to their practice of critical appropriation and original transformation as an act of (cultural) cannibalism; both the poetics of Concrete Poetry and the aesthetics of Cinema Novo are actually denominated as “new” and “revolutionary;” both Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo invoke ideographic forms of language and/or modes of writing in theory and in practice; both Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo present the Brazilian as representative of the Latin American; both Concrete Poetry and Cinema Novo are underdeveloped in the “American” Academy.

This dissertation proceeds by a procedure of academic *montage* and/or *bricolage* in the (dis)guise of citation and illustration, a subversive process of critical appropriation and original transformation in its own *rite*. If quotation is an act of repetition, in which a reference is used in deference, here citation is an act of reiteration, in which a text is used out of context. Since the art of illustration is used for explanation and/or decoration, this dissertation hereby proclaims a right to use copyrighted materials, in the forms of word and image, either by permission or under the appropriate law(s) of “fair use” policy, the *politique de cet auteur*. In re-writing (by) the rules of the game, this dissertation is written in a *space-in-between* the selected writings of established artists, writers, filmmakers, and critics, producing a hybrid discourse that appears ex-centric and/or *estranged* because of a certain uncertainty of ambivalence that (dis)affects the reading of the writing. When all is said and done, it could all be said and done *otherwise*. This dissertation also alternates between logical and analogical argumentation by re-drawing relations between the heretofore (non)related. On the one hand there is a reason, on the other hand there is an *other* reason. As such, this dissertation ultimately bears the re-mark of an *other* logic, namely, the cannibal logic of a Latin America under the sign of an *other* thinking.

This dissertation begins with a development of the figure of the cannibal and the trope of cannibalism in a New World trans-formed by modernity and/or coloniality. It follows the cannibalization of the cannibal and/or cannibalism as an expression of the nativist primitivism of an alternative modernism, which would enact a transculturation of international (or universal) and national (or local) traditions, and then considers the post-modernist “anthropophagic reason” of the “new barbarians” that would describe and/or prescribe the form(ul)ation of an anti-tradition from baroque non-origins to neobaroque

open-ends. Turning to the return of an *other* (neo) avant-garde under development in Latin America, it then presents both a revolutionary “new poetry” that deconstructs the logocentrism of Eurocentrism with a reconfiguration of universal (de)signs, and a revolutionary “new cinema” that decolonizes the Third World in a tricontinental mo(ve)ment, as illustrations of a (cultural) cannibalism both at work and at play in rewriting the *dictum*: without revolutionary form there is no revolutionary content. It finally concludes with the argumentation of a cannibal logic that, from an ex-centric *space-in-between* of (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness*, ultimately incorporates post-modern and post-colonial theory and criticism in order to become the model of an *other* thinking in a new world *order without borders*.

This dissertation was devised as a study in 4 main parts, each subdivided into 3 minor parts. There is an exception that violates the *schema*. In order to order the dissertation, the form is an expression of an antiquated *formula*: thesis → anti-thesis → synthesis. As such, the *thesis* of the first 3 main parts presents the dialogical and dialectical relations between the Latin American and the European, the *antithesis* presents the deconstruction and/or decolonization of the European by the Latin American, and the *synthesis* presents the universalism and/or alternativism of the Latin American in relation to the European. Meanwhile, the content is an expression of a novel *contention*: that *antropofagia*, or “cultural cannibalism,” is a viable and vital alternative to *mestizaje*, syncretism, creolization, transculturation, and hybridization as the description and/or prescription of the re-creative productions of the art(s) and culture(s) of the New World in light of modernity and the shadow of coloniality. As such, the introductory chapter presents a *genealogy* of (cultural) cannibalism, the first supporting chapter presents a *bibliography* of (cultural) cannibalism,

the second supporting chapter presents a *filmography* of (cultural) cannibalism, and the concluding chapter presents an *epistemology* of (cultural) cannibalism. The last main part actually presents the conception of a cannibal logic in relation to contemporary theory and criticism in both literary and cultural studies.

Each chapter of this dissertation opens with 2 epigraphs placed in dialogue and in counterpoint. The first epigraph represents a European discourse and the second epigraph represents a Latin American discourse. The introductory chapter on the “new barbarians” begins with the relations between the “noble savage” and the cannibal, proceeds to the cannibalization of the figure of the cannibal and/or trope of cannibalism in Brazilian *modernismo*, and ends with the universalization of an alternative (cultural) cannibalism by *other* (neo) avant-garde movements of Latin America. The chapter on “new poetry” begins with the relations between the contemporary movements of concrete music, concrete art, and concrete poetry, proceeds to the cannibalization of poetic modernism by *concretismo*, and ends with the universalization of an alternative ideographic form of language and/or mode of writing as the *lingua franca* of a New World. It particularly focuses on the poetry of Augusto de Campos and on the theory of concrete poetry developed by the Noigandres group (Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, Haroldo de Campos), presented as representative of the movement. The chapter on “new cinema” begins with the relations between the contemporary movements of Italian Neo-Realism, the French New Wave, and Brazilian Cinema Novo, proceeds to the cannibalization of cinematic modernism by *tropicalismo*, and ends with the universalization of an alternative cinematographic form of language and/or mode of writing as the *modus operandi* of a Third World. It particularly focuses on the films and essays of Glauber Rocha, presented as representative of the movement. The concluding

chapter on “new civilizations” begins with a discussion of a cannibal logic as a process of transculturation and hybridization, proceeds with a discussion of a cannibal logic as a process of deconstruction and deterritorialization, and ends with a discussion of a cannibal logic as a process of decolonization.

CHAPTER 1

NEW BARBARIANS

“Come all, and dine upon him, and welcome, for they shall withal eat their own fathers and grandfathers, whose flesh has served to feed and nourish him. These muscles [...] this flesh and these veins, are your own: poor silly souls as you are, you little think that the substance of your ancestors’ limbs is here yet; notice what you eat, and you will find in it the taste of your own flesh.”

– Michel de Montaigne

“Already, at this moment, the Europeans must learn to live with the new barbarians who, for some time, in an alternative and other context, have been devouring them and making them flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone, who have been resynthesizing them chemically by means of an impetuous and unrestrainable metabolism of difference.”

– Haroldo de Campos

The cannibals gather around the sacrificial fire that burns the dismembered parts of a human corpse. The enemy, from a warring tribe, has been ruthlessly captured and ceremoniously slaughtered, his dead body and living spirit consumed by the unrelenting flames of vengeance. In an abominable act of violence, the savages devour the flesh and bone of the outsider, whose head, torso, and limbs have fallen into the hands and mouths of voracious men, women, and children. The incorporation of both his physical and his spiritual attributes consummates the magical ritual of anthropophagy. Meanwhile, from a conspicuous vantage point an observer witnesses the diabolical, bacchanal feast in a state of horror and awe. Naked and divested, in the absence of a familiar culture and in the presence of an unfamiliar nature, the foreigner fears being assimilated by the natives. In spite of

himself, his force will be subverted, his *raison d'être* converted, as he will ultimately become another.

Such a (re)presentation of cannibalism in the Americas reveals a hidden fantasy, an imagination that is confused with reality. There is the Other, encountered on the distant shores of unknown lands and uncharted regions, described in the figure of a monstrous creature that is both man and beast, an image both prescribed and transcribed from the unconscious realms of a universal psyche. Here is the dark side of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, the underside of Modernity itself: the shadow of Coloniality. But if cannibalism as a trope is a subtext of colonialism, in the context of modernism and the avant-garde, anthropophagy also becomes a metaphor for decolonization. As such, from the ex-centric perspective of an alternative modernity, the Latin American artist and/or intellectual will re(dis)cover his hybrid identity and cannibalize the cannibal as the modernist protagonist of a (neo)baroque anti-tradition of revolt, transforming an otherwise Eurocentric discourse via a dialogical and dialectical process of transculturation: a revolutionary cannibal logic of alterity and marginality. Yes, the subaltern speaks, in a language of *difference* and/or *otherness*, in the re-writings of the new barbarians of the New World.



Illustration from *Americae Tertia Pars* – Theodore de Bry (1592)

Contrary to widespread and long-held belief, the Americas were not discovered by Europe. The myth of history might as such be re-told and/or re-written in another, different version. In this story, the discovery of the New World actually marks the *recovery* of the Old World, which had both found and founded itself anew. If man had supposedly fallen into ignorance during the “Dark Ages,” he was intellectually reborn during the Renaissance, before finally being reinstated during the “Age of Enlightenment.” The renewal of humanism, a restoration of the pillars of European culture, coincided with the exploration of the Americas and the encounter with other, different human beings: the Amerindians. There was mankind in a pure, (ab)original state, a free creature who must nonetheless also know, by the power of faith and the force of reason, the advantages of civilization and the advances of the Modern era. The “Age of Discovery” would therefore recover for Europe its lost or forgotten “golden” ages of innocence (Eden) and prominence (Rome).

In retrospect, however, Europe was not only recovered but also *uncovered* through the conquest of the Americas. In the New World, the progress of humanity would be unmasked as the ideology of capitalism, while the new humanism would be undressed as the discourse of colonialism. The utopia of the Americas might therefore have been unfounded, were it not always already a non-place that had become the location of the social, political, and cultural unconscious of Europe. In search of itself, a modern, civilized identity found its primitive, barbarian *other* in the mirror of its own reflection(s). In one sense, the “good” savage would resemble the Arcadian in nature, while in another, the “bad” savage would recall the Androphagi (“man-eaters”), whose manners were “more savage than those of any other race,” according to Herodotus.¹ Here, the native becomes a kind of *humanimal* who

threatens to consume the foreigner who (co)incidentally seeks to consume it. Inasmuch as each is driven by his desire, or appetite, for the other, the savage is none other than the *conquistador*, whose sword and religion are countered with spears and magic. As a consequence, the conquest uncovers the cannibal as the polemic figure of an ultimately Europeanized America.

This section traces the emergence and evolution of the figure of the cannibal and/or the trope of cannibalism in the (dis)course of modernity. It begins with the definition of the savage Amerindian as “man-eater” and follows the development of such a character in the fantastic depictions of the explorers Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci, the ethnographic descriptions of the adventurer Hans Staden and missionary Jean de Léry, the philosophical speculations of the humanist Michel de Montaigne, and the dramatic representation by the playwright William Shakespeare. It then relates the cannibal to the character of the “noble savage” as portrayed in literary works by writers such as John Dryden, Daniel Defoe, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose enlightened conception of “natural man” would (in)directly inspire a series of revolutions, both in Europe and the Americas. Finally, it considers the appropriation and transformation of a romanticized Amerindian into a symbol of national identity in the *indianismo* of poets and novelists such as Gonçalves Dias and José de Alencar.

man-eater

Defined as a “man-eater,” *cannibal* was a new word that originated in the New World. When Christopher Columbus landed in the Americas under the banner of a European

crown, he heard the docile Arawaks (Taíno) refer to the fierce Caribs as the *caniba*, and therefore believed that these were subjects of the Asian emperor(s) known, after the famous voyages of Marco Polo, as the *Gran Can* (Grand Khan). The term *cannibal* was also likely derived from the Spanish *can* (“dog”), of the Latin root *canis*. In the Carib language, however, *karibna* actually meant “person,” and therefore designated the indigenous “people” of what is now the Caribbean.² Other significations possibly included “brave warrior,” or even “manioc eater.”³ The word *cannibal* is therefore of diverse etymology, much like the identity and culture(s) of the Americas. As a concept, however, the neologism arose from a series of *misconceptions* and *preconceptions*. If the variance between *caníbales* and *caribes* represented a minor phonetic misunderstanding, the difference between Asians and Amerindians constituted a major ethnographic mistake, itself caused by a geographical error. That the Caribs, or cannibals, were akin to dogs illustrates the prejudice of Europeans predisposed to dehumanizing the newly discovered humans. In the travelogues of Columbus, transcribed by the priest and historian Bartolomé de las Casas, the explorers almost immediately learn of the existence of “hombres con hocicos de perros que comían a los hombres.” Elsewhere, Columbus and his crew are informed of people “que tenía un ojo en la frente, y otros que se llamaban caníbales.” Later, it is reaffirmed that the Arawaks (Taíno) are terribly afraid of the “Caniba,” who “no tenían sino un ojo y la cara de perro.”⁴ The Amerindians of “Caniba” (*caniba* + *-al*) are therefore represented, strangely enough, with the classical traits and/or features of mythological monsters such as the one-eyed cyclops and the dog-faced cynocephali. Without any real evidence of such a disfigured, deformed man-beast, however, this fantastic depiction of the Caribs was likely inspired by the medieval travel literature of voyagers such as Polo. The figure of the cannibal thus originated as a *fiction*, a

character in the tale of Europe's (mis)adventures in the Americas. For critic Carlos Jáuregui, the story of the word's origin is also a history of colonization.⁵

Although Columbus himself would eventually dispel the misguided and/or misplaced image of monsters in the Caribbean isles, the monstrous figure of the cannibal would continue to be represented in the writings of other renowned explorers and cartographers such as Amerigo Vespucci, for whom *America* was named. In letters such as *Mundus Novus* (1502-1503), which chronicle Vespucci's travels in the New World, the utopian vision of a paradise in which "cada uno es señor de sí mismo" is stained by a contrasting, conflicting image of primitive man.⁶ Despite the natural virtues, there are aborigines who also display an unnatural vice: "son gente belicosa. Y entre ellos muy crueles [...] y a los enemigos los despedazan y se los comen."⁷ Elsewhere, Vespucci writes further of the practice of cannibalism among the natives: "Los pueblos pelean entre sí sin arte y sin orden [...] unos a los otros los vencedores se comen a los vencidos y de la carne, la humana es entre ellos alimento común."⁸ In Vespucci's accounts, such a "bad" savage becomes the *other* side of the "good" savage, which is presented as an object of both longing and lust. For Jáuregui, the "*ego conquiro*" of the civilized European, in its state of melancholy, identifies itself with its "other" and thereby strives to incorporate the savage Amerindian:

Las gentes, las islas y tierras descritas hacen parte de un orden "natural" que empieza a ser construido como el objeto perdido y no renunciado de la melancolía cultural europea. Pero en ese orden también se perciben diferencias irreducibles y resistencias al consumismo colonial que generan un efecto de extrañamiento y amenaza.⁹

As such, the "good" and "bad" savages are essentially complementary opposites, a difference within the sameness of the Other. In a (psychoanalytic) sense, the European substitutes the Amerindian for his imaginary, lost object of desire, but in turn fears feeding the

Amerindian's (reciprocal) appetite for the European. Through the projection of the aforementioned *ego conquiro*, "toda resistencia del 'objeto' devendrá miedo primario a que la identidad sea incorporada y devorada."¹⁰ According to Jáuregui, the "idyllic" primitive thus gives way to the "deformity" and the "monstrosity" of the cannibal, who ultimately marks the limit of alterity as that *persona* which draws the line of "otherness:"

El caníbal habita la *Edad dorada* como dispositivo cultural de la Modernidad [...] para disuadir cualquier tentativa de entrega a la otredad. El miedo de ser comido sostiene el designo imperial del *ego conquiro* y su compromiso moderno con el presente de la civilización. La melancolía por el salvaje perdido se detiene a las puertas de la utopía que custodia el temido caníbal.¹¹

As both creature and creation, then, the cannibal arose as a modern figure of the imagination, the image of a radical difference that could not be reconciled, the incarnation of an Amerindian spirit that would not be incorporated without in turn assimilating the European *corpus*. If the "good" savage, in part, defines the imperial "design" of Modernity, it is likewise the sign of "el mal salvaje caníbal que amenaza reciprocamente con su apetito voraz el deseo colonial."¹²

In the travelogues and cartographies of the European conquest, the figure of the cannibal was not only a verbal trope but also a visual metaphor for the Americas, as can be seen and read in the allegorical representations and textual illustrations of the period. In the "figured personifications" of *Prosopographia* (1579-1600), by Philippe Galle, an engraving entitled *America* (1580) features a nude Amazon woman wearing a feathered headdress, holding a spear, and carrying the severed head of a man. According to the legend, "America" is "an ogresse who devours men, who is rich in gold, and who is skilled and powerful in the use of her bow."¹³ Note that the word *prosopographia*, from the Greek *prosopon* ("face" or "person") and *graphein* ("to write"), refers to the description of both real figures and

imaginary characters. Such a *graphic* depiction is not only a kind of drawing but also, and more significantly, a form of writing, allegory itself being a figurative mode of expression that is, in a sense, founded on difference and/or otherness. In *Prosopographia*, each figure signifies a meaning other than the literal one. Similarly, another engraving entitled *Discovery of America* (1588-1612), by Galle's son Theodor, represents a fictitious yet suggestive encounter between Vespucci, who holds an astrolabe and a cross, and America, who reclines naked on a hammock while her race of cannibals roast human legs over a fire.¹⁴ Here the image of a savage "America," as an object of both desire and disgust, is an ambivalent figure that expresses both the "good" and "bad" sides of the New World in its European representation(s). An allegorized "America" thus becomes emblematic of *difference*, while cannibalism becomes the ultimate "sign" of *otherness*.¹⁵

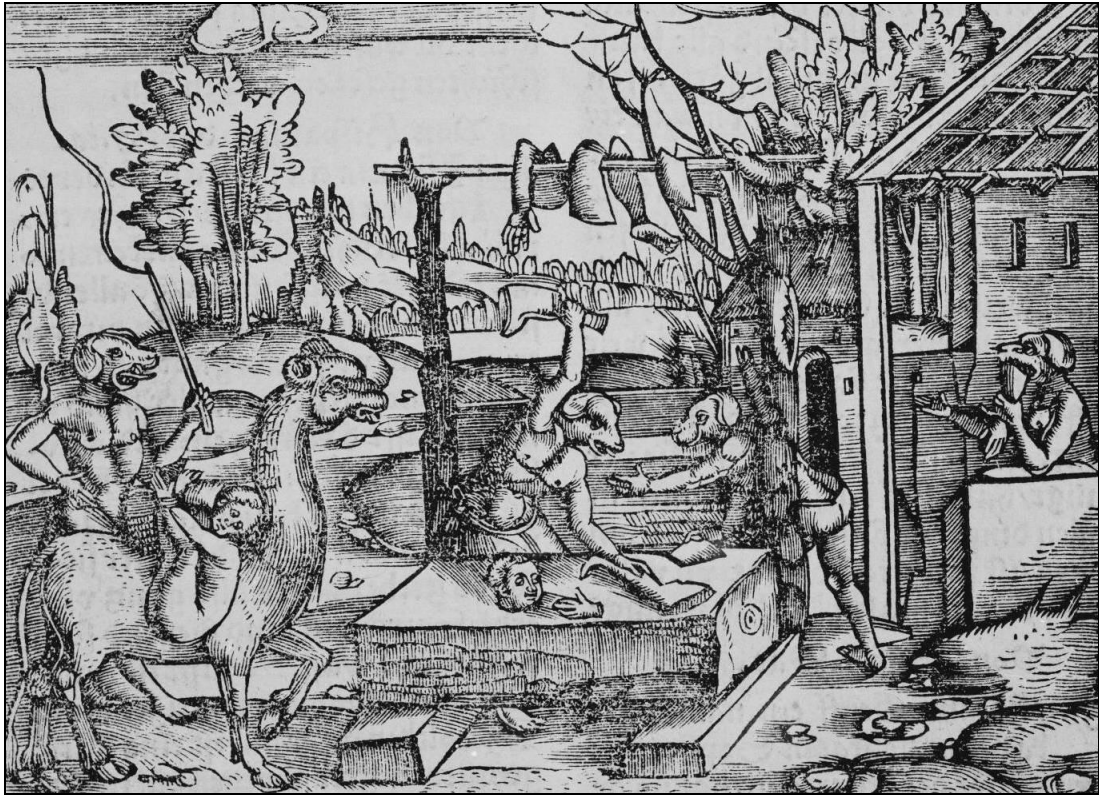
Allegorical representations of cannibals were the creations of artists who had not seen but only read about the New World from the writings of explorers whose observations inspired numerous textual illustrations of cannibalism in the Americas, images which range from fantastic depictions to ethnographic descriptions. A woodcut by cartographer Lorenz Fries entitled *Von Canibalien dem folck von Canaria* ("Cannibals on a Caribbean Island") appears to represent the (in)famous dog-faced cannibals that are reported in Columbus' diary. The monstrous figures butcher their human captives and prepare the flesh for consumption. An earlier woodcut by Johann Froschauer entitled *Amerikaner* (1505), which appears in the German edition of *Mundus Novus*, likewise depicts cannibals according to Vespucci's exotic view(s) of the New World, in which primitive man is both humane and savage. Maternal and amorous scenes are thus represented alongside the barbarous imagery of a woman chewing on an arm while other limbs are being smoked over a fire.¹⁶ The most popular illustrations of



America – Philippe Galle (1580)



Discovery of America – Theodore Galle, after Stradanus (Jan van der Straet) (1584)



Von Canibalien dem folck von Canaria (“Cannibals on a Caribbean Island”) – Lorenz Fries (1527)



Amerikaner – Johann Froschauer (1505)



Illustration from *Americae Tertia Pars* -- Theodore de Bry (1592)

cannibalism in the Americas were nonetheless created by Theodore de Bry, whose *Americae Tertia Pars* (1592) was based on the less fantastic and more ethnographic accounts of Hans Staden and Jean de Léry, who both lived among the Tupinambá of Brazil.¹⁷ As such, there are various scenes of naked men, women, and children devouring human body parts (heads, limbs, torsos, entrails, etc.), images which would establish the notorious figure of the cannibal in European culture.

The observations of explorers and/or adventurers such as Staden and Léry indicate a subtle shift in the figure of the cannibal in the Americas, from classical/medieval monster to pre-modern human. On his second voyage to the Americas, Staden not only shipwrecked but also had the (mis)fortune of being captured by the Tupinambá, who mistook the German mercenary for a Portuguese enemy. After his escape from an unsavory demise, he wrote and published the *Warhaftige Historia* (1557), a “true story” of his captivity which became an international success. The vivid descriptions of the Tupinambá were complemented by textual illustrations made by Staden himself, both of which featured their way of “killing and eating their enemies.”¹⁸

By Staden’s account, cannibalism was a ritual act of violence related to war and revenge, not to alimentation or subsistence. As such, at a climactic moment during the anthropophagic ceremony, the Tupinambá warrior, with weapon in hand, solemnly declares to his ever defiant captive: “I am he that will kill you, since you and yours have slain and eaten many of my friends.” To which the prisoner replies: “When I am dead I shall still have many to avenge my death.”¹⁹ The scripted dialogue between captor and captive is indicative of a code of conduct and/or behavior that reveals the formerly incomprehensible act of cannibalism to be a signifying cultural practice. In a sense, the figure of the cannibal is thus

humanized in the ethnographic descriptions of Staden and others, who were nonetheless predisposed to representing such atrocious behavior. As Jáuregui observes:

No hay ninguna otra costumbre o particularidad a la que Staden dedique más atención – entre el horror y la fascinación – que el canibalismo tupinambá. Puede decirse que éste es el principal *motif* del relato de esta subjetividad etnográfica. Staden traduce la alteridad y explica al caníbal, sus costumbres y creencias; sitúa el canibalismo no en el campo de la voracidad, sino de la violencia ritual: la antropofagia está unida a la guerra, la que a su vez tiene origen en la venganza.²⁰

Although monstrous, the cannibal is evidently human. As such, Staden corrects the classical/medieval fantastic representation of “otherness,” but still errs in founding a “modern ethnographic paradigm” also based on describing and/or transcribing the Other.²¹ Such a paradigm also appears to govern the account of Léry among the Tupinambá, which is considered to be a masterpiece of modern ethnography.²² In his *Histoire d’un voyage fait en la terre du Brésil, autrement dite Amérique* (*History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Also Called America* – 1578), Léry writes of a ceremony in which the “savages” had sung and danced:

Likewise, they had pronounced violent threats against the Ouetaca (a nation of enemy savages, who, as I have said elsewhere, are so warlike that they have never been able to subdue them), to capture and eat them, as their *caraïbes* had promised.²³

That cannibalism was once more depicted as a ritual act of vengeance against a foresworn enemy also reflects the complex relations between Amerindians and Europeans in the New World during the colonial period. For example, the Tupinambá and the French had developed a strategic alliance against the Tupiniquim and the Portuguese, a relationship that was primarily based on economic and/or commercial interests. Such an alliance thus forged an association which superseded the underlying differences between otherwise antagonistic

forces. Accordingly, Léry would represent the Tupinambá cannibals as “friends” or partners, both in trade and in crime. As Jáuregui observes:

Comían, sí, carne humana, pero eran amigos y socios; su antropofagia era un asunto relacionado con códigos de honor y guerra; algo ritual; nada alimenticio y, en todo caso, menos perverso que las persecuciones religiosas contra los protestantes en Europa.²⁴

Just as there had been “good” and “bad” savages in the socialist utopia of the New World, now there were “friendly” and “unfriendly” cannibals in the capitalist cornucopia of the Americas. For instance, the aforementioned Ouetaca were perhaps especially “mean” to Léry because of their reluctance to dialogue or exchange with Europeans. For Jáuregui, then, “la redefinición del tropo de canibalismo es estratégica y referida por asociación al colonizador competidor y enemigo, por una parte, y a la voluntad o reticencia a comerciar por otra.”²⁵ What does not change in the new or altered definition, however, is the relation between cannibalism and a barbarian “otherness,” inasmuch as the word *barbarous* originally signified both “foreign” and “unintelligible” (in language and/or culture). Léry himself states that the Ouetaca,

like dogs and wolves, eat flesh raw, and because even their language is not understood by their neighbors, they are considered to be among the most barbarous, cruel, and dreaded nations that can be found in all the West Indies and the land of Brazil.²⁶

Here the fantastic depiction of the cannibal as a fierce *canine* persists, if only by analogy. Nonetheless, as an ethnographic description of an Amerindian, the cannibal would ultimately become a figure of cultural “recognition” and critique: the primitive savage represents the *other* face of modern man.²⁷

The ethnographic descriptions of cannibalism would eventually invite philosophical speculations about *otherness*, as the object of a human science would become the subject of a

humanist discourse. Inspired by the account of Léry, the French essayist Michel de Montaigne wrote his reflections of the barbarian *other* in his seminal work “Des cannibales” (“Of Cannibals” – 1580), which compared (and contrasted) European and Amerindian cultures. The essay begins with a historical analogy that relates the (classical) past and the (colonial) present: when Greece invaded Italy, the Greek king admired the “order” of his Italian counterparts and exclaimed: “I know not what barbarians are these [...] but the disposition of this army is by no means barbarous.”²⁸ After considering that the Greeks referred to all foreign nations as “barbarian,” Montaigne then asserts that, based on what he knew about the newly discovered nation of Brazil, he sees “nothing barbarous or uncivilized about it, except that we call barbarism that which does not fit in with our usages.”²⁹ In the same passage he adds, interestingly enough, that “we have no other level of truth or reason but the example and model of the opinions and usages of the country we live in.”³⁰ The French writer would thus appear to argue against racial prejudice in favor of a cultural relativism that recognizes ethnographic difference(s). Contrary to his “good” intentions in promoting what would eventually become known as the *bon sauvage*, Montaigne’s observations about cannibals would not only reject the predominant European view of the Americas, but also paradoxically affirm a prevalent Eurocentric perspective of the New World and its new barbarians. Reconsidering the definition of *barbarous* in relation to the indigenous Tupinambá of Brazil, Montaigne describes the natives as uncultured, if not uncivilized, creatures:

Those nations, then, appear to me so far barbarous in this sense, that their minds have been formed to a very slight degree, and that they are still very close to their original simplicity. They are still ruled by the laws of Nature, and very little corrupted by ours; but they are still in such a state of purity, that I am sometimes vexed that they were not known earlier, at a time when there were men who could have appreciated them better than we do.³¹

In Montaigne's humanist discourse, the idyllic primitive or "good" savage of the discovery and conquest arguably reappears in the formerly monstrous figure of the cannibal, which is now conceived as a pre-modern human. The utopia of the New World thereby becomes a place that "surpasses" the depictions of the "golden age" and the inventions of a "happy state of man" created by poetry, as well as the ultimate "conceptions" and "desires" imagined by philosophy itself.³² Such a vision once more reveals not only a preconception and/or misconception but also an unconscious desire with respect to the Other, which becomes the model for both an ideal republic and a lost paradise. As such, the Amerindians recall the Arcadians of Greek mythology, while the Americas resemble *The Republic* of Greek philosophy:

This is a nation, I should say to Plato, which has no manner of traffic; no knowledge of letters; no science of numbers; no name of magistrate or statesman; no use for slaves; neither wealth nor poverty; no contracts; no successions; no partitions; no occupation but that of idleness; only a general respect of parents; no clothing; no agriculture; no metals; no use of wine or corn. The very words denoting falsehood, treachery, dissimulation, avarice, envy, detraction, pardon, unheard of. How far removed from this perfection would he find the ideal republic he imagined!³³

Such a rhetorical dialogue with Plato is nonetheless notable for what it does *not* note about an idealized America. By describing the Tupinambá "nation" in *negative* terms, Montaigne *negatively* represents the cannibal and the New World as a *negation* of Europe. The *non*-Europeans are therefore related in terms of what they are *not*, have *not*, and/or know *not*, as depicted by Vespucci in *Mundus Novus*.³⁴

No tienen paños de lana ni de lino, ni aún de bombasí [...] Ni tampoco tienen bienes propios, pero todas las cosas son comunes. Viven juntos sin rey, sin autoridad y cada uno es señor de sí mismo [...] Además no tienen ninguna iglesia, ni tienen ninguna ley [...] No son entre ellos comerciantes, ni mercan cosa alguna.³⁵

According to Jáuregui, such an absence, in effect, justified the colonial presence: “los ‘vacíos’ culturales del *Otro* son las condiciones que posibilitan discursivamente la ocupación, la desmesura expansiva y la formación de varios sujetos epistemológica y políticamente privilegiados: el conquistador, el evangelizador, el observador etnográfico, etc.”³⁶ Now, the philosopher and his humanist/colonialist discourse would assume such a privileged position in the search for another, *alternative* society. The Americas would as such become a mirror for Europe, a (self) reflection of the difference(s) between the humanity and barbarity of modern civilization.

If “Of Cannibals” humanizes the primitive Amerindian, it also conversely dehumanizes the modern European: the savage barbarian is none *other* than civilized man himself. Such a critique is prompted by a description of the cannibalism practiced by the Tupinambá, who after treating their prisoners “well” and giving them “all that hospitality can devise,” then proceeded to “roast and eat” their enemies, not for “nourishment,” but “to signify an extreme revenge.”³⁷ As in the ethnographic accounts of Staden and Léry, cannibalism in the Americas is thus related to vengeance and warfare, which is deemed not only “noble and generous,” but also “fair and excusable” according to Montaigne, especially when compared to the political and/or religious persecution witnessed in Europe at the time:³⁸

I am not so much concerned that we should remark on the horrible barbarity of such acts, as that, whilst rightly judging their error, we should be so blind to our own. I think there is more barbarity in eating a live than a dead man, in tearing on the rack and torturing the body of a man still full of feeling, in roasting him piecemeal and giving him to be bitten and mangled by dogs and swine [...], than in roasting and eating him after he is dead.³⁹

The context of Montaigne’s remarks was evidently the (un)civil wars between Catholics and Protestants in 16th century France, where such horrific acts were practiced in the name of

God and country. As such, Montaigne argues that Europeans may refer to the Tupinambá as “barbarians in respect to the rules of reason, but not in respect to ourselves, who surpass them in every kind of barbarity.”⁴⁰ In the Americas, then, Europe consequently (and conveniently) recognized its barbarous *self* in the practices of a barbarian *other*. Notwithstanding the professed (or confessed) “barbarity” of Europeans, the Amerindians were still essentially perceived as barbaric with respect to the “rules” or logic of a Eurocentric “reason,” which effectively concealed its (imperial) colonialist rhetoric in the guise of (universal) humanist discourse. Although once more reaffirming the cultural relativity of barbarism, Montaigne ultimately reasserts the preconceived notion that the cannibal is, indeed, a barbarian after all.⁴¹

Although “Of Cannibals” presents the Amerindian as “savage” and/or “barbarian” in fact, it also represents the cannibal as “a fiction that by no means savours of barbarity.”⁴² The discovery of such a contradictory, *fictitious* figure would accordingly inspire an exploration of the trope of cannibalism in other writings of the period. For instance, William Shakespeare was arguably influenced by Montaigne when he wrote *The Tempest* (1611), whose character Caliban is perhaps the most controversial cannibal in world literature. There is even a passage from Shakespeare’s play that seems to have been paraphrased (or else *cannibalized*) from Montaigne’s essay. After the king’s “honest old counsellor” Gonzalo expresses his initial admiration for the island where the royal party had shipwrecked, exclaiming how “green,” “lusty,” and “lush” the grass appeared, how there was “everything advantageous to life,” he then declares how he would rule what one of his companions decries to be a deserted, “uninhabitable, and almost inaccessible,” land:

I’ the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic

Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
 Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
 And use of service, none; contract, succession,
 Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
 No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
 No occupation; all men idle, all;
 And women too, but innocent and pure;
 No sovereignty;—
 [...]

All things in common nature should produce
 Without sweat or endeavour: treason, felony,
 Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,
 Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,
 Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,
 To feed my innocent people.
 [...]

I would with such perfection govern, sir,
 To excel the golden age.⁴³

Not only do Gonzalo's observations about the island recall other utopian depictions of the New World, but his declarations would appear to refer to Montaigne's description almost verbatim. That such remarks were proffered under the (imaginary) prospects of a benevolent despotism also (unconsciously) reinforces the imperialist and/or colonialist ambitions of an otherwise humanist discourse. Although the island was already inhabited upon the arrival of the displaced Prospero, the "rightful" duke of Milan would immediately subjugate the natives to his rule by the law of the *letter*. Empowered by his magical books of sorcery and spells, he thus acquires both an "airy spirit" servant called Ariel and "a savage and deformed slave" called Caliban, whose name is actually an anagram of *caníbal*. Although not literally presented as such, Caliban will ultimately be *figuratively* represented as a cannibal.

Inasmuch as *The Tempest* allegorizes the discovery and conquest of the New World, the figures of Ariel and Caliban correspond to (stereo)typical representations of the "good" and "bad" savage. For the renowned Uruguayan writer José Enrique Rodó, whose essay *Ariel* (1900) is considered by critics to be a masterpiece of Latin American *modernismo*,

Ariel symbolizes “la parte noble y alada del espíritu,” while Caliban is the “símbolo de sensualidad y de torpeza.”⁴⁴ The former would thereby personify the noblest features of civilization, while the latter would exemplify the crudest aspects of barbarism.⁴⁵ Despite such differences, both similarly embody the *otherness* of the native in relation to the foreigner, who imposes his dominion over the land. As Prospero’s subjects, Ariel is marked by his compliance and servitude, while Caliban is on the contrary marked by his defiance and revolt. In a particularly significant dialogue (or exchange) between master and slave, Caliban vehemently expresses his ill feelings toward the learned magician, whom he accuses of theft and deceit:

This island’s mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first,
Thou strokedst me and madest much of me, wouldst give me
Water with berries in’t, and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I loved thee
And show’d thee all the qualities o’ the isle,
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:
Cursed be I that did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own king: and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o’ the island.⁴⁶

Like the Europeans who landed in the Americas in search of prosperity, the *oppressor* Prospero sought to *prosper* on the island by (ab)using the indigenous Caliban to his advantage and usurping his natural sovereignty.⁴⁷ Referring to his “abhorred,” “savage,” “brutish,” and “vile” slave, who is elsewhere described by the jester Trinculo as both a “monster” and a “strange beast” of a man, Prospero counters that he had “pitied” Caliban and took “pains” to teach him to “speak” when he could only “gabble,” to which his indignant subject duly responds:

You taught me language; and my profit on't
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language!⁴⁸

In an ingenious form of metaphorical cannibalism, Caliban thereby incorporates the “language” of Prospero in order for the slave to “curse” the master by the force of his own words. As such, Caliban would prosper both *in spite of* and *by means of* Prospero himself. Such a fictional response to (colonial) power would, in a trans-atlantic and trans-historical context, be echoed in the actual counteraction to (neocolonial) influence which occurred in the form of cultural decolonization, as the subaltern artist and/or intellectual of the Americas would learn to both appropriate and transform a Eurocentric discourse. Rather than erect the symbol of the “good” or “noble” savage as the basis for its hybrid identity, Latin America would eventually de-construct the figure of the *ignoble* savage or cannibal as the foundation for its own transcultural *alterity*. In the words of the revolutionary Cuban critic Roberto Fernández Retamar:

Our symbol then is not Ariel, as Rodó thought, but rather Caliban. This is something that we, the *mestizo* inhabitants of these same isles where Caliban lived, see with particular clarity: Prospero invaded the islands, killed our ancestors, enslaved Caliban, and taught him his language to make himself understood. What else can Caliban do but use that same language - today he has no other - to curse him, to wish that the “red plague” would fall on him? I know no other metaphor more expressive of our cultural situation, of our reality.⁴⁹

noble savage

Whether in the fantastic history of Columbus and Vespucci, the modern ethnography of Staden and Léry, the humanist philosophy of Montaigne, or the dramatic story by Shakespeare, the recurring figure of the cannibal as a barbarian *other* is always already

related to what would become the (stock) character of the so-called “noble savage,” who first appeared as such in John Dryden’s “heroic drama” entitled *The Conquest of Granada* (1670-1671). In a play that stages the Spanish crown’s reconquering of Al-Andalus in 1492, the year that (co)incidentally marked the beginning of the conquest of the Americas, there is a significant dialogue in which the hero Almanzor, who has just been condemned to death, proclaims his own freedom by referring to that of the “savage:”

No man has more contempt than I of breath.
But whence hast thou the right to give me death?
Obeyed as sovereign by thy subjects be.
But know, that I alone am king of me.
I am as free as nature first made man.
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.⁵⁰

If the “noble savage” is humanized by the protagonist’s depiction of natural man, it is subsequently dehumanized by the antagonist’s description of the primitive as adverse to man:

Since, then, no power above your own you know.
Mankind should use you like a common foe;
You should be hunted like a beast of prey:
By your own law I take your life away.⁵¹

The dialogue between the Moorish king Boabdelin and the rebel Almanzor, who is later revealed to be of Spanish origin, illustrates the contrasting (pre)conceptions of the “savage” *humanimal* which would dominate the literature of the colonial period, from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. For example, such a (mis)conception is evident in the popular novel *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), by Daniel Defoe, in which the opposing figures of the “noble” savage and the barbarous cannibal are reunited into one and the same character. In yet another story of imperial pursuit and colonial desire, the restless adventurer Crusoe, who for a time is enslaved by the Moors, eventually shipwrecks on an island somewhere off the “savage coast” between the Caribbean and Brazil, which was inhabited by

“the worst of savages.”⁵² According to Crusoe, whose suppositions are based on hearsay and/or racial prejudice, the natives are “cannibals or men-eaters, and fail not to murder and devour all the human bodies that fall into their hands.”⁵³ While stranded on the island, Crusoe must furthermore live with “the dread and terror of falling into the hands of savages and cannibals,” ultimately expecting to be “murdered and devoured” at any moment.⁵⁴ Such a nightmarish fantasy becomes a horrible reality when the stranded castaway finally observes cannibals with his own eyes, a sight which was described as indescribable:

When I was come down the hill to the shore [...] I was perfectly confounded and amazed; nor is it possible for me to express the horror of my mind at seeing the shore spread with skulls, hands, feet, and other bones of human bodies; and particularly I observed a place where there had been a fire made, and a circle dug in the earth, like a cockpit, where I supposed the savage wretches had sat down to their human feastings upon the bodies of their fellow-creatures.⁵⁵

Although Crusoe is aware that cannibalism was a ritual act of violence related to tribal warfare, in which “the victors, having taken any prisoners, would bring them over to this shore, where, according to their dreadful customs, being all cannibals, they would kill and eat them,” he nonetheless believes it to be a form of nourishment.⁵⁶ He therefore develops an “abhorrence of the savage wretches,” in addition to the “wretched, inhuman custom of their devouring and eating one another up,” and ultimately proceeds to fancy a number of inventive means “to destroy some of the monsters in their cruel, bloody entertainment, and if possible save the victim they should bring hither to destroy.”⁵⁷ On a later occasion he actually realizes his wish by rescuing one of the captives who would be slaughtered, and upon saving the unfortunate wretch, he immediately enslaves him and becomes his master. Like Prospero the magician, Crusoe the adventurer subjects Friday to his authority under the pretext of civilizing the savage. Besides teaching him language, Crusoe also aims to “bring

Friday off from his horrid way of feeding, and from the relish of a cannibal's stomach.”⁵⁸

Unlike Caliban, the ignorant and subservient native does not rebel against the learned and oppressive foreigner, and instead pledges his loyalty and allegiance. Like the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the French, the English also come to colonize the Americas and subjugate the Amerindian(s) to its rule, imposing its Eurocentric reason in the process. As such, the barbarian *other* is transformed, by the force of an enlightened civilization, into a “noble” savage.

The idealized *bon sauvage*, which paradoxically reflects a nostalgia for primitivism alongside an apology for civilization, would eventually encounter its most influential (and controversial) proponent in the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose writings constituted important treatises of the Enlightenment and significant precursors of Romanticism. Following in the tradition of Montaigne, Rousseau presents the figure of a barbarous savage as a counterpart to civilized man in order to critique European society and culture from the standpoint of an imagined *otherness*. The much commented theory of “natural man,” who had originally lived in a pure “state of nature,” is thereby expounded in the *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (*Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* – 1754), otherwise known as the “Second Discourse,” in terms that relate to the idea(l) of a “noble savage.” Acknowledging the history of the concept, Rousseau begins by observing that previous philosophers who inquired into the “foundations of society” all felt “the necessity of going back to a state of nature,” but that philosophy has so far only “transferred to the state of nature ideas which were acquired in society; so that, in speaking of the savage, they described the social man.”⁵⁹ Rousseau thus recognizes (good) “nature” as the basis for the evolution of (bad) “society,”

though he would also criticize any and all descriptions of the *other* which merely reflected the essence of the *same*. Unaware that he might, in effect, repeat such an epistemological error, the Genevan philosopher speculates on the “natural state of man” from the perspective of a newly enlightened reason, a vantage that both romanticizes “natural man” as a subject of rhetoric, and naturalizes the “savage” as an object of discourse. As such, Rousseau introduces the “question” of the origins of humanity as a hypothesis that would, in his own words, be “quite impossible to prove:”

Let us begin then by laying facts aside, as they do not affect the question. The investigations we may enter into, in treating this subject, must not be considered as historical truths, but only as mere conditional and hypothetical reasonings, rather calculated to explain the nature of things, than to ascertain their actual origin; just like the hypotheses which our physicists daily form respecting the formation of the world.⁶⁰

Inasmuch as Rousseau’s argument is founded, at least in part, on admittedly “vague and almost imaginary conjectures,” it becomes evident that the figure of “natural man” is as much a trope as the aforementioned “noble savage.” For Jáuregui, such a form of savagism was ultimately “una *construcción imaginaria*,” in which the savage becomes “un pretexto, una herramienta de pensamiento: un *personaje conceptual*.”⁶¹ The philosopher is therefore not concerned with actual facts but with hypothetical concepts which, as the history of science illustrates, are often proven to be untrue or altogether false. To his credit, Rousseau actually ventures “to doubt whether the state of nature ever existed,” and to “deny that, even before the deluge, men were ever in the pure state of nature.”⁶² Nonetheless, he proceeds throughout his “discourse” to compare and contrast “natural” man with “civilized” man, arguing for the physical and moral superiority of the savage, even when the barbarian becomes civil, so to speak.⁶³ Needless to say, such a view was quite radical even in the Enlightenment era, and would eventually inspire a revolutionary (re)vision of Europe.

Contrary to established (mis)readings, Rousseau's *Second Discourse* does not advocate a conservative regression to "savagery" but instead proposes a revolutionary progression toward "civility."⁶⁴ If the first part constitutes an investigation of the origins of "natural man," the second part thereby considers the evolution of "civilized man," from a remote past to the actual present. Basing his theoretical suppositions on documented observations of Amerindians, Rousseau believes that the dawn of society caused "the first obligations of civility even among savages," and as a consequence, "revenge became terrible, and men bloody and cruel," which was purportedly "the state reached by most of the savage nations known to us."⁶⁵ Although such a claim arguably conceals a reference to the practice of cannibalism in the Americas, Rousseau denies any innate disposition to evil, and counters that "nothing is more gentle than man in his primitive state, as he is placed by nature at an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes, and the fatal ingenuity of civilised man."⁶⁶ As such, society in a "primitive" state is characterized by a balance of nature and culture that is supposedly present in the Americas but apparently absent in Europe. In speaking of the virtues of "natural man," Rousseau thus creates a significant distinction between "the pure state of nature" and "the new-born state of society," which would ultimately represent the ideal state of humanity before its descent into decadence. Although the "new" man was already far removed from his original state of nature, the disappearance of purity was compensated by the emergence of morality:

Morality began to appear in human actions, and every one, before the institution of law, was the only judge and avenger of the injuries done him, so that the goodness which was suitable in the pure state of nature was no longer proper in the new-born state of society. Punishments had to be made more severe, as opportunities of offending became more frequent, and the dread of vengeance had to take the place of the rigour of the law. Thus, though men had become less patient, and their natural compassion had already suffered some diminution, this period of expansion of the human faculties, keeping a

just mean between the indolence of the primitive state and the petulant activity of our egoism, must have been the happiest and most stable of epochs. The more we reflect on it, the more we shall find that this state was the least subject to revolutions, and altogether the very best man could experience; so that he can have departed from it only through some fatal accident, which, for the public good, should never have happened. The example of savages, most of whom have been found in this state, seems to prove that men were meant to remain in it, that it is the real youth of the world, and that all subsequent advances have been apparently so many steps towards the perfection of the individual, but in reality towards the decrepitude of the species.⁶⁷

From the “example” of savages, Rousseau again imagines the birth of civil society as having been marked by a certain harmony of nature and culture. If such a moment began a “period of expansion of the human faculties,” it must furthermore have been “the happiest and most stable of epochs,” or else “the very best man could experience.”⁶⁸ In effect, not only is the classical myth of a Golden Age reactivated in the romantic discourse of Rousseau, but the “natural man” of enlightenment reason is also affiliated with historical (and rhetorical) figures such as the *homo silvestris* of medieval utopianism and the *cannibal* of Montaigne’s renaissance humanism, which are both also related to the “good” or “noble” savage.⁶⁹ In yet another reencounter with a paradise lost after the fall of man, America once more becomes a reflection of Europe inasmuch as the primitive comes to exemplify the *pre-modern*. As Jáuregui observes:

La visión idílica del edén no proviene de América sino de la continuidad de mitos clásicos y populares europeos que se usan para imaginar un momento anterior a la razón y al Estado, una felicidad perdida por el pecado original de la modificación de lo “natural”, el desarrollo de la sociedad, el progreso y el capitalismo [....] En este sentido Rousseau hace parte de la tradición autocrítica de la Modernidad que es, como el mito del *buen salvaje*, anterior a él, y que tendrá desarrollos posteriores en el Romanticismo y hasta la actualidad.⁷⁰

Founded in a tradition of *self*-criticism via *another*, the Eurocentric preconception (or misconception) of the *bon sauvage* has thus evolved, throughout the Renaissance and the

Enlightenment, into a forceful critique of modern civilization and its discontents. But if Montaigne's cannibal potentially illustrated the philosophical and/or cultural evolution instigated by the discovery and conquest of the New World, Rousseau's "natural man" would actually inspire social and/or political revolutions in both Europe and the Americas. Before remarking that the "new-born" state of society had been "the least subject to revolutions," Rousseau suggests that contemporary society was most prone to revolution due to its inherent "inequality," which is the stated theme of his essay. In the preface to his *Discourse on Inequality*, Rousseau speaks of *revolution* in its mythological sense (a *return* to origins), its etymological sense (a *turn* of events), and its political sense (a *revolt* of the masses):

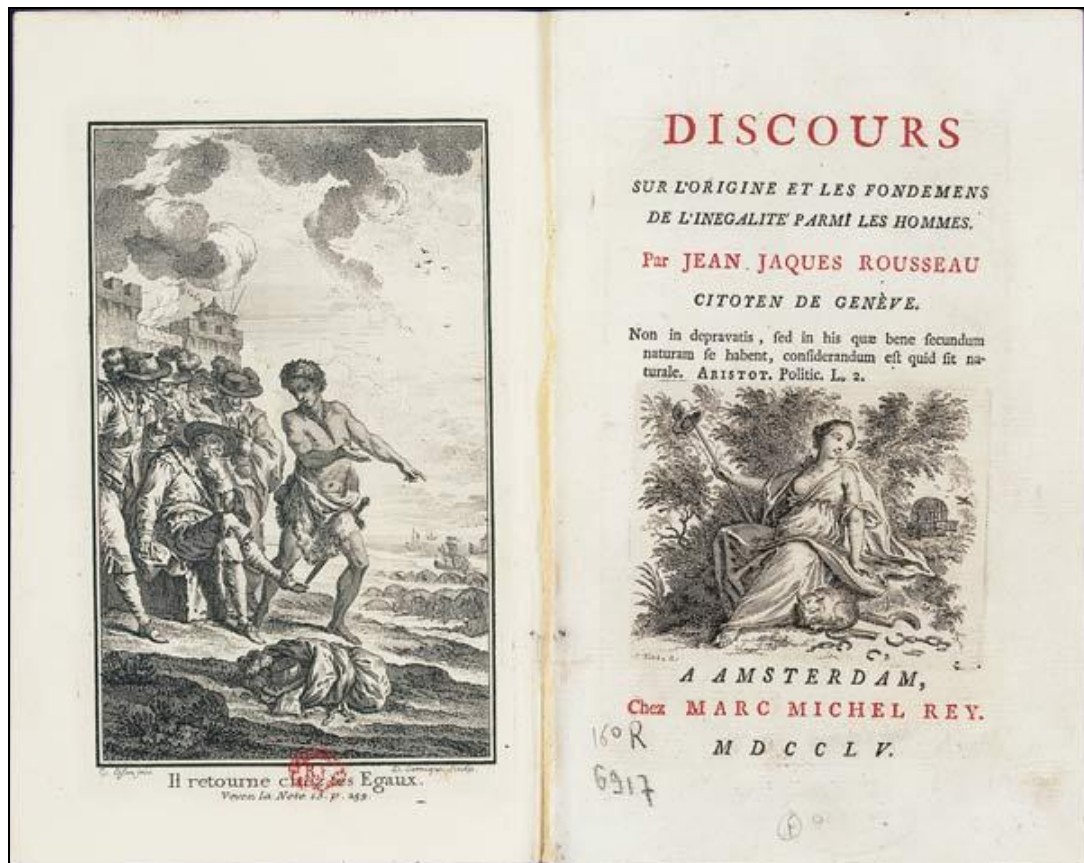
Discontented with your present state, for reasons which threaten your unfortunate descendants with still greater discontent, you will perhaps wish it were in your power to go back; and this feeling should be a panegyric on your first ancestors, a criticism of your contemporaries, and a terror to the unfortunates who will come after you.⁷¹

The revolutionary sentiment of the discourse on inequality, which develops the theory of "natural man," is therefore based upon a desire "to go back" to a previous (ab)original state, not of nature but of society, which can only be realized, paradoxically, by advancing forward. Anticipating the response(s) of his critics, Rousseau rhetorically asks: "What, then, is to be done? Must societies be totally abolished? Must meum and tuum be annihilated, and must we return again to the forests to live among bears?"⁷² Replying that only his egoistic "adversaries" should seek to resume their "ancient and primitive innocence," Rousseau counters that reasonable men, who have forever lost their "original simplicity," should instead strive to cultivate morality, or to "endeavour to merit the eternal prize they are to expect from the practice of those virtues, which they make themselves follow in learning to know them."⁷³ The conclusion of the discourse thus reveals an alternative, allegorical

meaning for the otherwise historical frontispiece, which features the figure of a savage rejecting civilization in favor of barbarism. Inspired by a not so “well-authenticated” account in the *Histoire générale des voyages* (1746-1759) about a Dutch governor who raised an Amerindian in the ways and manners of European culture, the engraving, whose caption reads “Il retourne chez ses Égaux” (“He returns to his Equals”), would seem to advocate a return to the pure state of “natural man” were it not, arguably, a representation of Rousseau’s (unconscious) desire to substitute himself as philosopher for the figure of the governor, who appears to contemplate the words and actions of the trans-cultured savage. Such a will to power, on Rousseau’s part, would ultimately reveal the presence of a revolutionary spirit or consciousness, which is both philosophical and political, that originates in the primitive figure of “natural man” and culminates in the moral character of a newly social man who is also essentially “natural.” As Aristotle states in *Politics*, in a passage that was significantly chosen as the epigraph of the *Second Discourse*: “We should consider what is natural not in things depraved but in those which are rightly ordered according to nature.”⁷⁴ As such, the new man and his new state of society, founded by a revolution, would therefore reconstitute a synthesis of nature and culture, found in the *bon sauvage*, in its re(dis)covery of a classical past for the enlightenment of a romantic future.

indianism

Formulated by the critical discourse(s) of thinkers and writers such as Rousseau, Enlightenment reason provided the rationale for a series of revolutions, both in Europe and in the Americas, which would inaugurate the “Age of Modernity.” Accordingly, the



Frontispiece and title page of the *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* – 1754

establishment of new republics was enacted by universalist declarations of the “Rights of Man” that had been derived from “natural law.” One of the first of the so-called “Atlantic Revolutions” (co)incidentally began in the New World and culminated in the foundation of the United States of America. Explicitly referring to the “Laws of Nature,” the American *Declaration of Independence* (1776) holds certain “truths” to be “self-evident,” adding that “all men are created equal” and thereby possess “unalienable” rights, which include “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” The American Revolution vindicated the right to “alter or to abolish” British colonial rule and to “institute” a new form of government, which would be based, in effect, on Enlightenment principles. Both the declaration and the *Constitution of the United States* (1787), which included its own “Bill of Rights,” were not only inspired by European philosophy, however, but were also influenced by Amerindian society. The United States would later officially “acknowledge the contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the development of the United States Constitution” in a congressional resolution, adding that “the original framers of the Constitution, including, most notably, George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, are known to have greatly admired the concepts of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy.” Such concepts included the “political system” developed by the Iroquois, as well as their “democratic principles, which were incorporated into the Constitution itself.” The document ends by categorically reaffirming “the contribution made by the Iroquois confederacy and other Indian nations to the formation and development of the United States.”⁷⁵ As such, the first revolutionary movement to de-colonize the New World originated, in a sense, from the transcultural encounter, or dialogue, between a European vision and an American version of the “noble savage.”

Although the founding of the United States of America was, in part, modeled upon significant features of Native American culture and/or society, the new republic was primarily influenced by Enlightenment principles developed in Great Britain and France. Accordingly, the French Revolution would constitute a radical socio-political transformation in which an “absolute” monarchy and aristocratic ideals were deposed and replaced by a representative democracy and a bourgeois ideology. The most renowned document from the revolution, the *Déclaration des droits de l’Homme et du Citoyen* (*Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* – 1789), opposes the divine right of kings with the “natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man,” which ultimately include “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.”⁷⁶ Like the American *Declaration of Independence*, the French declaration was based on “incontestable” principles that were deemed universal in scope and in character. Inasmuch as such principles invoke the rule of “natural law,” they relate to Rousseau’s “natural man,” which would eventually become the theoretical basis for his ideas of a “social contract” and the “general will.” The *Declaration of the Rights of Man* was undoubtedly influenced by Rousseau’s *Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique* (*The Social Contract, or Principles of Political Right* – 1762), another important philosophical and political treatise with revolutionary insights, such as: “Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains.”⁷⁷ In addition to (pro)claiming that men “are born and remain free and equal in rights,” the declaration argues for social man and/or civil society in asserting that law “is the expression of the general will.”⁷⁸ Such a “general” will is ultimately related to the idea of “sovereignty,” the principle of which “resides essentially in the nation.”⁷⁹ The downfall of the crown and the birth of the republic in various other nation-states thus signaled the rise of

nationalism(s) across both Europe and the Americas, as Enlightenment ideals and/or ideologies traversed the Atlantic and altered the destiny of the New World.

As the course of history would illustrate, by an ironic twist of fate, a philosophical and socio-political discourse of European self-criticism, which was based on an image of Amerindians, inspired a revolution in the land where the “noble savage” had been discovered. The American Revolution, which established a new constitution based on Enlightenment principles and Native American practices, in turn impacted the land where the “natural man” had been conceived. Finally, the French Revolution, which drafted similar declarations of human rights founded on the principles of “natural law” and a “social contract,” influenced the land(s) where the cannibal had been imagined. As such, in the midst of the Caribbean isles, a slave uprising erupted in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, clamoring for an end to an oppressive colonial rule. The Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), incited by arguably the most important slave revolt of the New World, culminated in independence from France and the proclamation of a republic, the first in what would significantly be called “Latin” America. Both hopeful and fearful of the consequences, Creole elites in other nations would rebel against Spanish colonial rule in a number of revolutionary wars led by the *libertadores* during the early 19th century, eventually forming democratic republics across Central and South America. Unlike the other newly established Spanish-American nations, Brazil would retain a monarchy after declaring independence from Portugal in 1822, thereby founding a new empire in the New World. Despite not constituting a republic, the country had already witnessed the effect(s) of the Enlightenment during the Inconfidência Mineira (1789), a thwarted revolutionary movement led by Tiradentes, who would later be romanticized as a hero by the founders of the Estados

Unidos do Brasil (1889). As such, the trans-atlantic, trans-historical evolution of the *bon sauvage* ultimately founded an anti-colonial *nativism* in Latin America that would further develop into various manifestations of nationalist sentiment.

In both Europe and the Americas, just as the Enlightenment would precede Modernity in terms of philosophy, Neoclassicism would cede to Romanticism in terms of literature. Consequently, the figure of the “noble savage” also experienced significant alterations, as the discovery of an exotic *other* would be reflected in the recovery of a native identity. While Europeans returned to the chivalric romances of the Medieval era for inspiration, Latin Americans turned to the indigenous legends of the pre-conquest era in order to recreate the founding myths of the nation. The appearance of a European medievalism was thus mirrored by the emergence of a Latin American *indianismo* that sought to reencounter the savage in order to re(dis)cover the birth of a race, often in the union of primitive Amerindians and civilized Europeans. Inasmuch as Romanticism was essentially marked by a nostalgic longing for an original nature, which was forever lost, *indianismo* arguably signaled the emblematic desire for a native culture, which was ever *other*. Despite the marginalization, enslavement, and/or extermination of the aborigines, the romanticized figure of the Indian presented a new (re)vision of the *bon sauvage* of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment in its representation of a national hero that in a sense reunites nature and culture as it reconsiders the relation between the native and the foreign. An important, albeit particular, feature of Latin American Romanticism, *indianismo* would as such express another, alternative face of nationalism.

Although the Indian figured as a prominent symbol for the construction of a Latin American identity, *indianismo* as a literary trope was perhaps most significant in Brazil,

where it followed the progression of a dependent and/or colonial literature into an independent and/or post-colonial literature. Forerunners included the *autos sacramentales* by the priest José de Anchieta, as well as the epic poems “O Uruguai” (1769), by Basílio da Gama, and “Caramuru” (1789), by Santa Rita Durão, works that form an important part of the national canon. After the Brazilian independence, the *nativismo* of the Baroque and Neoclassicism would evolve into the *indianismo* of Romanticism, which was expressly related to nationalism. If arcadian poets such as Cláudio Manuel da Costa and Tomás Antônio Gonzaga had conspired to form a republic during the Inconfidência Mineira, romantic poets, dramatists, and novelists such as Gonçalves Dias and José de Alencar would inspire the formation of a national identity and/or culture based on *mestiçagem* (“mixture”), or hybridity. A *mestiço* (“mestizo”) himself, Gonçalves Dias composed a number of poems idealizing an exotic Indian whose American (Brazilian) traits arguably resemble the European characteristics of the “noble savage.” Published as one of his “Poesias americanas,” the most celebrated of his *indianista* poems, “I-Juca-Pirama” (1851), portrays the Amerindian in (stereo)typically romantic form:

São rudos, severos, sedentos de glória,
 Já prélios incitam, já cantam vitória,
 Já meigos atendem à voz do cantor:
 São todos Timbiras, guerreiros valentes!
 Seu nome lá voa na boca das gentes,
 Condão de prodígios, de glória e terror!⁸⁰

The epic poem, which incidentally alludes to the practice of ritual cannibalism by the Timbira, a tribe inimical to the Tupinambá, is not only embellished by a courageous heroism but also contaminated by a narcissistic egoism endemic to the Romantics, who often transferred to nature and/or to the *other* aspects of culture and/or the self. Despite being both an ethnographer and a linguist, who actually published a dictionary of the Tupi language, the

poet appears to also have suffered the inspiration of the European medievalism that would evidently mark his (Latin) American *indianismo*. For critic Maussaud Moisés:

o indígena de Gonçalves Dias ou é projeção de seu *ego* repleto de emoção, ou de estereótipos fixados na leitura de poetas portugueses [...] Desse modo, o evasionismo romântico cumpria-se na temática indianista, ressoando mesmo a transferência de padrões medievais. Idealizado, o íncola de Gonçalves Dias é ficção [...] para onde refluem os projetos oníricos do poeta no rumo de uma bem-aventurança utópica e a visualização duma Idade Média miticamente perfeita e feliz.⁸¹

In its depictions of a pre-modern utopia inhabited by the familiar *bon sauvage*, the *indianismo* of Gonçalves Dias is therefore a consequence of the thematic exploration (or exploitation) of the Indian as a romantic figure in order for the nationalist poet to recognize himself in another. As such, the fictitious idealization of an original Brazilian identity reflects both American and European features. Acknowledging the fundamental significance of the poetic representation of a (native) savage as a (national) hero, the critic Antonio Cândido ultimately asserts that Gonçalves Dias “poesia indianista” should be read as an “antevisão lírica e épica das nossas origens, revigorando as intenções nacionalistas do Romantismo.”⁸²

Throughout history, myths of origin have been composed in the form of renowned epics such as *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, and the *The Aeneid*, all of which served to found, in effect, the Greco-Roman culture of Antiquity that would eventually colonize Latin America. With the advent of Modernity, however, the (historical) novel would in a sense come to substitute the (epic) poem in the foundation of the nation. If Luís Vaz de Camões had glorified the Portuguese empire in *The Lusiads* (1572), José de Alencar exalted the Brazilian race in his *indianista* trilogy, *O Guarani* (1857), *Iracema* (1865) and *Ubirajara* (1874), all of which represent the figure of the Indian as a national hero. Originally published in the form

of a *feuilleton*, the popular novel *O Guarani* was arguably a literary response to “A Confederação dos Tamoios” (1856), an epic poem written by Gonçalves de Magalhães that was based on the historic revolt of the Tupinambá against Portuguese rule.⁸³ Alencar was extremely critical of Magalhães, who had actually introduced Romanticism in Brazil, and wrote a series of anonymous letters denouncing not only the exotic aesthetics in his description of a native landscape and indigenous customs, but also the archaic poetics in his depiction of the Amerindians:

Escreveríamos um poema, mas não um poema épico; um verdadeiro poema nacional, onde tudo fosse novo, desde o pensamento até a forma, desde a imagem até o verso. A forma com que Homero cantou os gregos não serve para cantar os índios; o verso que disse as desgraças de Tróia e os combates mitológicos não pode exprimir as tristes endeiças do Guanabara, e as tradições selvagens da América.⁸⁴

In his polemical reaction, Alencar was essentially arguing in favor of a new poetics for the New World, in both form and content. The model of classical mythological poetry was deemed not only inappropriate for the expression of a modern “national poem,” but also inadequate for the illustration of local color. According to Alencar’s incisive verdict, “Magalhães não só não conseguiu pintar a nossa terra, como não soube aproveitar todas as belezas que lhe ofereciam os costumes e tradições indígenas.”⁸⁵ Pronouncing an alternative program for the form(ul)ation of a national literature, Alencar thereby sought to put theory into practice with *O Guarani*, which tells the story of the allegorical union between the Portuguese Cecília (Ceci) and the Indian Peri, who has exchanged his native customs to serve a foreign master. As a historical novel that mythologizes the origins of a new (Latin) American race, *O Guarani* may be said to represent, in the authoritative words of Alencar himself:

o consórcio do povo invasor com a terra americana, que dele recebia a cultura, e lhe retribuía nos eflúvios de sua natureza virgem e nas reverberações de um solo esplêndido [...] É a gestação lenta do povo americano, que devia sair da estirpe lusa, para continuar no Novo Mundo as gloriosas tradições de seu progenitor. Esse período colonial terminou com a Independência.⁸⁶

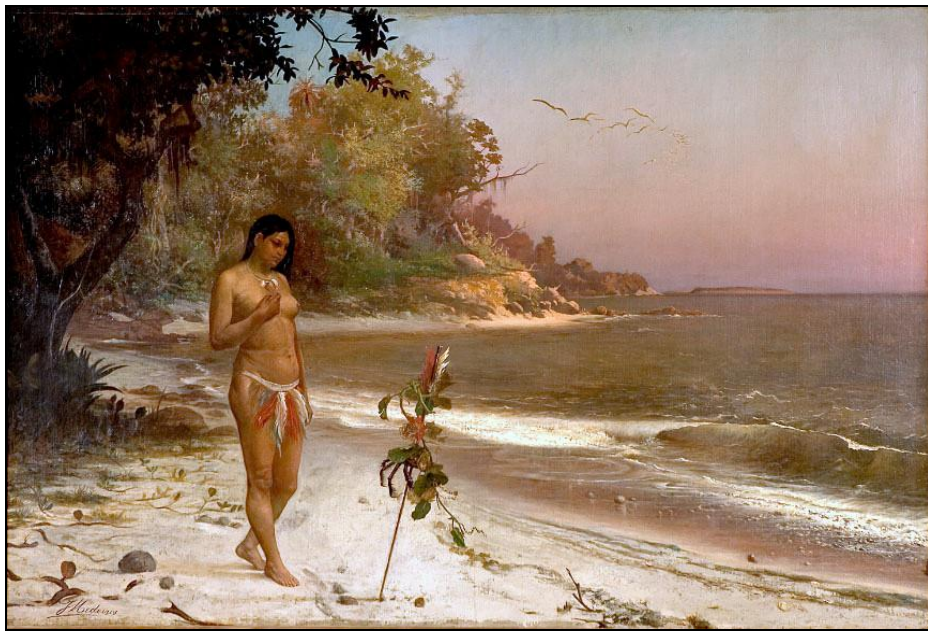
With Alencar's "paternal blessing," a national literature would therefore develop from the "consortium" between an "invading" European culture and a "virgin" American nature that would submissively bear its offspring. As such, a history of colonization is ultimately related to an act of procreation and/or period of "gestation." Although the beginning of the Brazilian nation would imply the end of the Portuguese colony, the new race of the New World should nonetheless perpetuate the "glorious" traditions of the Old World. As *O Guarani* demonstrates, particularly in the predilection for the heroic character of the "noble savage" (the Guaraní), who has been culturally assimilated, and in the rejection of the vile figure of the barbarous cannibal (the Aimorés), whose *other* tradition threatens to devour civilization itself, the legacy of colonialism persists in the nationalism of *indianismo*.

A nationalist icon, the romanticized Indian reappears in *Iracema*, which is presented as a legend and composed in a poetic prose that arguably transforms the historical novel into a modern epic, retelling the story of the procreation of the "white warrior" Martim Soares Moreno and the "honey-lipped virgin" Iracema, whose name is actually an anagram for America. Unlike the allegorical figure of a man-eating Amazon depicted in the Renaissance, the symbolic image of America described in (Brazilian) Romanticism represents an alternative personification of the beautiful and/or the feminine, though her character is similarly exoticized as an *other* representation of beauty and/or woman. The romantic traits of the native Amerindian, once combined or *mixed* with the heroic attributes of the foreign European, would inspire the ideal model for the (Latin) American race. In a post-script to

Iracema, Alencar writes of the genesis of his *indianista* masterpiece, arguing that related works had not yet “realized” what he denominates a “national poetry,” at least not with respect to his studies of the “savage life” of Brazilian “autochthons.” Overall, *indianismo* either erred in its “abuse” of indigenous terminology, which compromised both the “harmony” of the Portuguese language and the “intelligence” of the literary work, or else excelled in style and imagery, which compromised a “certa rudez ingênua de pensamento e expressão, que devia ser a linguagem dos indígenas.”⁸⁷ Citing Gonçalves Dias as “o poeta nacional por excelência,” Alencar praises the content of his “poesias americanas” for its imaginative, knowledgeable, and beautiful depictions of nature and the Indian, but nonetheless criticizes its unnatural form of expression, lamenting not only that “os selvagens de seu poema falam uma linguagem clássica,” but also that they “exprimem idéias próprias do homem civilizado, e que não é verossímil tivessem no estado da natureza.”⁸⁸ Conceptually and linguistically, then, *indianista* poetry is reprimanded for its classical (as opposed to modern) structure and its civilized (as opposed to barbarian) logic. Based on his literary experience with *Iracema*, Alencar proceeds to outline another, different national poetics founded upon an alternative form of *indianismo*:

o poeta brasileiro tem de traduzir em sua língua as idéias, embora rudes e grosseiras, dos índios; mas nessa tradução está a grande dificuldade; é preciso que a língua civilizada se molde quanto possa à singeleza primitiva da língua bárbara; e não represente as imagens e pensamentos indígenas senão por termos e frases que ao leitor pareçam naturais na boca do selvagem.⁸⁹

For Alencar, the form(ul)ation of a truly Brazilian poetry would thus require a difficult but necessary process of cultural translation by which a “primitive” and/or “barbarous” language is re-created in the words of a modern and/or “civilized” language. Needless to say, both the images and the thoughts of the Indian are to be represented by the writer in accordance with



José Maria de Medeiros, *Iracema* – 1881

what seems “natural” to the reader regardless of the “savage,” who *literarily* has words (trans)planted into his “mouth.” Apparently unaware of the gross contradiction(s) of his own *indianismo*, such as between the graciousness of his ideal Indian and the rudeness of the real savage, Alencar nonetheless proposes the transformation of a literary tradition by arguing that a civilized (European) language must “mold” itself, as much as possible, to the primitive (Amerindian) language of a barbarian *other*. Only the development of a *mestiço* and/or hybrid literature, based on such a process of transculturation, would be able to represent a truly national poetics in both form and content:

O conhecimento da língua indígena é o melhor critério para a nacionalidade da literatura. Ele nos dá não só o verdadeiro estilo, como as imagens poéticas do selvagem, os modos de seu pensamento, as tendências de seu espírito, e até as menores particularidades de sua vida.⁹⁰

Despite the paternalistic, patronizing, or else colonialist perspective of the romantic Brazilian author in relation to his exotic Indian subject, the mere desire to represent a “savage” Other by means of *another*, *alternative* language arguably constituted an innovative (re)vision of a poetics, in which nationalism aspires to decolonization. Inasmuch as the “nationality” of Brazilian literature was to be based on the “knowledge” of indigenous forms of expression, *indianismo* becomes the source from which would arise a “true national poem,” as imagined by Alencar.

If both the historical *O Guarani* and the legendary *Iracema* revisit the beginning(s) of the colonial period, *Ubirajara* reimagines the pre-colonial origins of Brazil (and Latin America) as it tells the story of the founding of an Indian nation in the marriage of Jaguarê and Araci, which constituted an allegorical union between the Araguaia and the Tocantins tribes. The final novel in the *indianista* trilogy accordingly represents the Indian in a manner that once more contrasts the image of the “noble savage,” associated with the Age of

Enlightenment and Modernity, with the figure of the barbarous cannibal, associated with the Age of Discovery and Conquest. In his “Advertência” to the reader, Alencar observes the affiliation between *Ubirajara* and *Iracema*, arguing for the appropriateness of the title “legend” in order to honor the traditions of the “pátria indígena,” and challenges contemporary preconceptions (or misconceptions) of the “savage.”

Quem por desfastio percorrer estas páginas, se não tiver estudado com alma brasileira o berço de nossa nacionalidade, há de estranhar em outras coisas a magnanimidade que ressumbra no drama selvagem a formar-lhe o vigoroso relevo.

Como admitir que bárbaros, quais nos pintaram os indígenas, brutos e canibais, antes feras que homens, fossem suscetíveis desses brios nativos que realçam a dignidade do rei da criação?⁹¹

As the “warning” illustrates, beastly and/or ungodly images of “barbarians,” “brutes,” and “cannibals” persisted in the (un)conscious perceptions of the Indian, who is on the contrary characterized by Alencar in terms of the “magnanimity” and “dignity” befitting of a national hero or icon. Both the historical and the fictional accounts of colonial literature, stained with a certain “intolerance” toward *otherness*, therefore warranted “severe” criticism for its Eurocentric perspective that (con)fused civilization and barbarity:

Homens cultos, filhos de uma sociedade velha e curtida por longo trato de séculos, queriam esses forasteiros achar nos indígenas de um mundo novo e segregado da civilização universal uma perfeita conformidade de idéias e costumes.

Não se lembravam, ou não sabiam, que eles mesmos provinham de bárbaros ainda mais ferozes e grosseiros do que os selvagens americanos.⁹²

Like Montaigne, a contradictory Alencar compares European and Amerindian cultures in order to criticize a would-be “universal civilization” that had itself descended from barbarians. By relating the New World savage to its “fiercer” and “grosser” counterpart, the Indian is effectively represented as a barbarous creature indeed, which was a far cry from its idealized, romanticized version. In addition to once more observing the “improper” language

and the “shameless” imagination of other *indianista* writers, Alencar notes that information about the Amerindians was largely derived from either adventurers or missionaries, both of whom, despite their differences, similarly “figured” the aborigines as *humanimals*, the former to justify the “cruelty” of colonialism, the latter to sanctify the “importance” of catechism.⁹³ Such accounts or “appreciations” are repudiated as “ridiculous” by Alencar, who instead wishes to provide “uma idéia exata dos costumes e índole dos selvagens.”⁹⁴ Despite such true intentions, the figure of the Indian actually suffered from a “pathetic” fallacy that plagued both *indianismo* and Romanticism, inasmuch as the new barbarian reflected the *ego* of the old civilization that humanized it. For Moises, the *indianista* trilogy perpetuates an already familiar discourse, since in all three works, “o aborigine é visto com lentes cor de rosa, envolto dum halo ideal que já vinha pelo menos de ‘I-Juca-Purema.’” Differentiated from the “white” European, the Amerindian is furthermore an instrument of sociocultural criticism:

Ser mítico, o indígena alencariano é pleno de qualidades, em flagrante contraste com os brancos, não raro primários e viciosos. Para os silvícolas, vão todas as simpatias; aos brancos fica reservada sempre a pior parte no concerto geral: batem-se em lutas fratricidas ou desconhecem os bons sentimentos dos nativos. A explicação para o idealizado retrato do índio reside na possível influência do pensamento rousseauiano, filtrado pela poesia de Gonçalves Dias, conjugada a outros fatores.⁹⁵

In dialogue with Montaigne’s cannibal and Rousseau’s “natural man,” Alencar’s Indian would therefore appear to demonize a foreign European society and glorify a native (Latin) American race. An emblematic character and/or heroic protagonist of a national literature, the naturalized *bom selvagem* ultimately figures as the romantic spirit and/or mythical ideal of a symbolic *indianismo* that sought to form a new transcultural identity in the New World.

MODERN(IST) ANTHROPOPHAGY

The evolution of the figure of the cannibal, and the development of the corresponding trope of cannibalism, illustrated a trans-atlantic, trans-historical dialogue between a European fantasy and an Amerindian reality, as a modern civilization encountered *itself* via *another* in the (ab)original (dis)guise of the primitive barbarian. In the wake of (Latin) American independence, a post-colonial literature delegated a universalized image of the “noble savage” as a symbol of its mestizo identity and relegated allegorical representations of the beastly “man-eater” to an unconscious (non) space of alterity. The adoption and adaptation of such a romanticized discourse in the form of an exoticized *indianismo*, rather than enlighten the New World, cast the Americas once more under the shadow of a coloniality that reflected the underside of modernity, inasmuch as the new humanism expressed the ideology of (neo)colonialism. Formulating its own nationalist poetics of critical appropriation and original transformation, a counter-discourse of cultural decolonization would nonetheless arise under the banner of a revolutionary Latin American avant-garde movement that emerged in dialogue with its European counterparts. Exploring contemporary tendencies in art, literature, and music, a Brazilian *modernismo* thus appeared as a response to Cubism, Futurism, Expressionism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. If a nativist Romanticism had naturalized “natural man,” an alternative Modernism would in turn cannibalize the *caníbal* in order to re-create a transcultural identity founded on difference and/or otherness.

This section traces the reemergence of the figure of the cannibal and/or trope of cannibalism in Modernism, both in Europe and in Latin America. It begins by considering the “barbarism” of Italian Futurism, as outlined by F.T. Marinetti, and its assimilation by

artists and writers associated with Brazilian *modernismo*, such as Oswald de Andrade and Mário de Andrade, who were also inspired by Guillaume Apollinaire's *l'esprit nouveau*. It then follows the evolution of a modernist primitivism in artists and writers associated with the European avant-garde, such as Pablo Picasso, Umberto Boccioni, Wassily Kandinsky, Richard Huelsenbeck, Tristan Tzara, Francis Picabia, and André Breton. It finally presents the incorporation of primitivism by artists and writers associated with Brazilian *modernismo*, such as Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade, who would ultimately develop a theory and practice of (cultural) cannibalism, or *antropofagia*, that (pro)poses the cannibal as an emblem of Latin American alterity.

futurism

Composed of a series of diverse yet interrelated aesthetic and theoretical movements, Modernism developed concurrently in Europe and the Americas, though the former traditionally constitutes the center and the latter the periphery of (western) cultural production. Despite the relatively distinct manifestations of Spanish-American and Brazilian art and literature, the evolution of writing in Latin America from its (non) origins in the Baroque followed the progression of the major European periods until the advent of Modernism and the avant-garde. Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, Parnassianism, and Symbolism all encountered forms of expression in Latin America that, in relation to their European forebears, were generally original in content despite being arguably imitative in form. All such movements originated in Europe, with the exception of the Spanish-American *modernismo* that began in the late 19th century and subsequently

charted course to Spain. This very first “modernism” actually arose in Latin America rather than in Europe, though it was more or less equivalent to French Parnassianism and Symbolism. By assimilating certain aspects of several periods, *modernismo* was nonetheless the first relatively independent movement in the New World to, if not invert the problematic hierarchy of “influence” or “debt” posited by Eurocentric criticism, convert an Old World literature to its poetic credo. Following *modernismo*, both the Spanish-American *vanguardia* and Brazilian *modernismo* movements of the early 20th century similarly incorporated techniques associated with their European counterparts, albeit in a decidedly more original fashion that effectively paralleled global developments. As such, *creacionismo* in Chile, *ultraísmo* in Argentina, *estridentismo* in Mexico, and *modernismo* in Brazil, despite the historically marginal status of Latin America in the so-called “world literature” of the period, all emerged in dialogue with the European avant-garde as flag-bearers of a fundamentally *international Modernism*.

In a sense, Modernism not only represents a culmination of modernity, an age of rupture and progress, but also corresponds to a modernization of the arts, forms of representation and/or expression and critique. At the turn of the 20th century, modernization via technological advancements was rapidly transforming society and culture. As such, the future had already come to pass in the form of ships, trains, cars, motorcycles, airplanes, and other machines. Romanticizing a newfound “beauty of speed,” the Italian poet F. T. Marinetti would launch a polemical avant-garde movement in “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” (1909).⁹⁶ With its iconoclastic aesthetics and radical poetics, Futurism bombarded the art world with various innovations and experimentations in poetry, painting, music, photography, sculpture, cinema, theater, and architecture. In all such futurist

manifestations, the increasing mechanization of modern life was reflected in forms of (plastic) dynamism and (lyrical) simultaneity that were complemented by a barbaric discourse of violence and destruction. Not only would the arts be conceived as “a violent attack on unknown forces, to reduce and prostrate them before man,” but, in addition, the Futurists would communicate a desire to “glorify war [...] militarism, patriotism” and “destroy the museums, libraries, academies of every kind.”⁹⁷ Ultimately, as Marinetti’s self-proclaimed “violently upsetting incendiary manifesto” attests, Futurism was inspired by a spirit of revolution and revolt:

We will sing of great crowds excited by work, by pleasure, and by riot; we will sing of the multicolored, polyphonic tides of revolution in the modern capitals; we will sing of the vibrant nightly fervor of arsenals and shipyards blazing with violent electric moons; greedy railway stations that devour smoke-plumed serpents; factories hung on clouds by the crooked lines of their smoke; bridges that stride the rivers like giant gymnasts, flashing in the sun with a glitter of knives; adventurous steamers that sniff the horizon; deep-chested locomotives whose wheels paw the tracks like the hooves of enormous steel horses bridled by tubing; and the sleek flight of planes whose propellers chatter in the wind like banners and seem to cheer like an enthusiastic crowd.⁹⁸

With its cult(ure) of technology and/or the machine, Futurism would thereby revolutionize the arts through various manifestos, writings, and exhibitions, inaugurating the historical cycle of the avant-gardes.

After raging across Europe, the Futurist movement would soon make headlines in Latin America, provoking diverse reactions. As early as 1909, the *modernista* poet Rubén Darío published a newspaper article entitled “Marinetti y el Futurismo,” which not only discussed the founding manifesto but also suggested that the movement was *passé*, ascribing its origins to the Mallorcan writer Gabriel Alomar, who had earlier given a lecture entitled *El Futurisme* (1904).⁹⁹ Although the rise of Futurism exerted no influence over Spanish-

American *modernismo*, it would significantly inspire the development of its Brazilian namesake, which was arguably “the Latin American avant-garde movement that most profited by, underwent and questioned the influence of, Futurism” according to critic Jorge Schwarz.¹⁰⁰ Futurism was initially disseminated in Brazil by the influential poet and playwright Oswald de Andrade, who in 1912 had returned from his travels in Europe with news of the newest trends and/or tendencies. The term *futurismo*, connoting a new form of “barbarism,” began to circulate in the press shortly afterwards, eventually becoming associated with the emerging artists and writers of *modernismo*.¹⁰¹ In the article “O Meu Poeta Futurista” (1921), Oswald de Andrade himself applied such a label to his friend Mário de Andrade upon previewing *Paulicéia desvairada* (1922), an early collection of poetry considered by critics to be a cornerstone of *modernista* verse. In the “extremely interesting” preface to the work, Mário de Andrade refutes such a title: “I am not a Futurist (after Marinetti). I have said so before and I repeat it. I have points of contact with Futurism. When Oswald de Andrade called me a Futurist, he was wrong.”¹⁰² Despite admitting “points of contact” with Futurism, the “pope” of *modernismo* rejects the *futurist* denomination in his playful yet serious “Prefácio interessantíssimo,” an important poetic manifesto which elsewhere expresses both admiration and criticism for Marinetti:

Marinetti was wonderful when he rediscovered the suggestive, associative, symbolic, universal, and musical power of the liberated word. Beyond that: it is as old as Adam. Marinetti was wrong: he made a system out of the liberated word. It is just an extremely powerful auxiliary. I employ liberated words. I feel that my cup is too large for me, and yet I drink from the cups of others.¹⁰³

In contradictory fashion, Mário de Andrade both denies and affirms the influence of a Futurism which is once more regarded as *passé*. The dialogue between a European and a Latin American vanguard ultimately represented a dialectal tension of imitation versus

originality that characterizes the search for a cultural identity rooted in difference, as an alternative modernism sought to re-read and/or re-write the *modern* in another context:

And forgive me for being so behind the times regarding present-day artistic movements. I am old-fashioned, I confess. No one can liberate himself once and for all from the granddaddy theories he has imbibed, and the author of this book would be a hypocrite if he pretended to represent a modern orientation which as yet he himself does not totally comprehend.¹⁰⁴

Assimilating the modernist art and theory of Europe, both Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade comprised “a primeira *bandeira* futurista” in the words of fellow *modernista* Menotti del Picchia, who nonetheless negates any and all affiliation with the movement in “Arte Moderna” (1922), which outlines the “warrior” aesthetics of what would finally become known and referred to as *modernismo*.¹⁰⁵

A nossa estética é de reação. Como tal, é guerreira. O termo *futurista*, com que erradamente a etiquetaram, aceitamo-lo porque era um cartel de desafio [...] Não somos nem nunca fomos “futuristas”. Eu, pessoalmente abomino o dogmatismo e a liturgia da escola de Marinetti. Seu chefe é, para nós, um precursor iluminado, que veneramos como um general da grande batalha da Reforma, que alarga seu “front” em todo o mundo. No Brasil não há, porém, razão lógica e social para o *futurismo ortodoxo*, porque o prestígio do seu passado não é de modo a tolher a liberdade de sua maneira futura. Demais, ao nosso individualismo estético, repugna a jaula de uma escola. Procuramos, cada um, atuar de acordo com nosso temperamento, dentro da mais arrojada sinceridade.¹⁰⁶

The dialogue between Italian *futurismo* and Brazilian *modernismo* is thus described as a “reaction” by the Latin American vanguard movement to its European “precursor.” Despite the affinities, there were marked differences in aesthetics, notably with respect to tradition. If Futurism was a movement of innovation and/or reformation, *modernismo* was a movement of renovation and/or transformation, in which the past was ever present. Repudiating the “dogmatism” of an “orthodox” futurism, the expressed “individualism” of Brazilian artists and writers opposed the “cage” of any particular school, preferring instead to create

independently and/or “sincerely” according to “temperament.” Differentiating the spirit of a new age and/or a new art in the New World, “Arte Moderna” was actually presented as a pronouncement during the seminal Semana de Arte Moderna (1922), whose (un)original title was supposed to have been the “Semana de Arte Futurista.” Involving art, literature, and music, the Week of Modern Art was arguably the most significant historical moment in Brazilian *modernismo*, effectively inaugurating the movement with a series of exhibitions, readings, performances, lectures, and other polemics. Following the progressive tide of vanguard manifestos and/or manifestations in Europe, the event was held in February, presumably in order to anticipate the ill-fated Congrès de Paris, which had been scheduled for March of the same year in order to discuss “l’esprit moderne.”¹⁰⁷ The title “modern” had been chosen after the already established writer Graça Aranha, whose lecture “A emoção estética na arte moderna” opened the festivities, had returned to Brazil with information about new developments. Unceremoniously substituting the label *futurista*, the name *modernista* was thus inspired by notions of a “espírito moderno,” a variant of “l’esprit nouveau” originally coined by Guillaume Apollinaire, an influential poet and critic with ties to Cubism, Futurism, and Dadaism.¹⁰⁸

In a sense, *l’esprit nouveau* contrasted the constructive energies of a post-war age to the destructive forces of the pre-war era. Apollinaire’s manifesto “L’Esprit nouveau et les poètes” (1917-1918) marked a recovery of the past, in the form of tradition, for a vanguard aesthetics theretofore concerned with the discovery of the future, in the form of innovation:

L’esprit nouveau qui s’annonce prétend avant tout hériter des classiques un solide bon sens, un esprit critique assuré, des vues d’ensemble sur l’univers et dans l’âme humaine, et le sens du devoir qui dépouille les sentiments et en limite ou plutôt en contient les manifestations.

Il prétend encore hériter des romantiques une curiosité qui le pousse à explorer tous les domaines propres à fournir une matière littéraire qui permette d'exalter la vie sous quelque forme qu'elle se présente.

Explorer la vérité, la chercher, aussi bien dans le domaine ethnique, par exemple, que dans celui de l'imagination, voilà les principaux caractères de cet esprit nouveau.¹⁰⁹

Despite its inheritance from both the classics and the romantics, the “new spirit” was fundamentally modern and marked by experimentation, which would thereby produce a “synthesis” of the arts of music, painting, and literature. The Futurists are thereby named as the progeny of *l'esprit nouveau*, which is ultimately “distinguished” from previous literary and/or artistic movements, according to Apollinaire, whose new poetics nonetheless intends to comprehend all the current and former literary “schools:”

L'esprit nouveau est avant tout ennemi de l'esthétisme, des formules et de tout snobisme. Il ne lutte point contre quelque école que ce soit, car il ne veut pas être une école, mais un des grands courants de la littérature englobant toutes les écoles, depuis le symbolisme et le naturisme.¹¹⁰

With its pronounced opposition to formulaic aestheticism, such a “new” poetics would be further developed in the homonymous magazine *L'Esprit Nouveau* (1920-1925), which was associated with the movement of Purism. Not only would the concept of *l'esprit nouveau* exert a profound influence on Graça Aranha, whose later pronouncement “O espírito novo” (1924) constituted a defining moment in the history of Brazilian literature, but the magazine *L'Esprit Nouveau* would also encounter an avid reader in Mário de Andrade, whose “Prefácio interessantíssimo” even refers to the publication as his “stilt” in relation to his theory on the development (or lack thereof) of a modern “harmonism” or “simultaneism” in contemporary poetry. Harmony and/or simultaneity had nonetheless already been present in the “polyphonic” and/or “orchestral” style of Marinetti’s *parole in libertà* (“words-in-freedom”), which certainly informed Mário de Andrade’s notion of “poetic polyphony.” If

the former “destroyed” syntax via “fistfuls of essential words in no conventional order” and with “*no connecting strings*,” the latter similarly “scorned” grammar by having “words follow each other without any immediate connection.”¹¹¹ Both as such advocated a form of “lyricism” composed of “telegraphic” language and the “liberated” word. In Brazil, a Futurist sensibility thus influenced the poetic form(ul)ation of a “new” and/or “modern” spirit that, despite its constructive dialogue with the past and tradition, was clamoring for modernization. As the *modernista* of “Arte moderna” forcefully proclaims:

Queremos luz, ar, ventiladores, aeroplanos, reivindicações obreiras, idealismos, motores, chaminés de fábricas, sangue, velocidade, sonho em nossa arte. Que o rufo de um automóvel, nos trilhos de dois versos, espante da poesia o último deus homérico, que ficou anacronicamente a dormir e a sonhar, na era do *jazz band* e do cinema, com a flauta dos pastores da Arcádia e os seios divinos de Helena.¹¹²

Such technological and/or technical advances in society and the arts ultimately form the elements of the “modern aesthetics” of *modernismo*, Menotti del Piggia concludes.¹¹³

Would Apollinaire’s observations of *l’esprit nouveau* refute the ancient dictum that there is “nothing new under the sun?”¹¹⁴ Or might Futurism actually represent a form of neo-romanticism with its cult of the beauty of speed? If the Romantics had reacted to industrialization by idealizing a natural man, the Futurists responded to modernization by romanticizing the technological machine. Both movements likewise championed the romantic ideals of poetic inspiration and aesthetic innovation, in addition to ideas of social revolution and political nationalism. Nonetheless, if Romanticism had essentially civilized the savage, Futurism effectively barbarized man. As such, the Futurists were actually (and expressly) anti-romantic, though the movement notably reflected attributes of what constituted the *other* facet of Modernism and the avant-garde: a modern primitivism with romantic antecedents.

primitivism

Representing a form of “barbarism” in both art and theory, Futurism heralded the “new” and/or “modern” spirit that would influence a number of vanguard movements in both Europe and the Americas. Inasmuch as significant currents in Modernism can be characterized as a revolt against beauty and aesthetics, or else as a reaction against the *status quo*, the various innovations of the avant-garde may also be considered *revolutionary*, in both the common and the etymological sense of the word. Not only did such movements propose radical changes with the intended purpose of overthrowing established aesthetic, cultural, social and/or political conventions, but many also marked the return of *other*, supposedly pre-modern traditions. Such modernist revolutions paradoxically recapitulate the past and inaugurate the future: if the avant-garde foresees another, often utopian future, it also recalls another, often mythical past. Hence the development of *modern* techniques and styles was complemented by a newfound interest in older, so-called *primitive* forms of expression that were being re(dis)covered at the time. Consequently, there are significant features of Cubism, Futurism, Expressionism, Dadaism, and Surrealism that display a dialectical tension between the modern and the primitive which would effectively characterize Modernism in its vanguard manifestations.¹¹⁵ As critic Hal Foster observes, in an aptly titled essay “The ‘Primitive’ Unconscious of Modern Art” (1985), such a “primitivism” was not only a form of aesthetic dialogue but also a type of psychological response to the “shock” of the primitive and its “primal” and/or “exotic” nature, which in effect “posed a double threat to the logocentric West, the threat of otherness and relativism.”¹¹⁶ Tracing a genealogy of the

European (mis)conception of the savage *other*, Foster comments upon the historical development of the “figure” of the primitive in a modern (Western) culture:

Historically, the primitive is articulated by the West in deprivative or supplemental terms: as a spectacle of savagery or as a state of grace, as a socius without writing or the Word, without history or cultural complexity; or as a site of originary unity, symbolic plenitude, natural vitality. There is nothing odd about this Eurocentric construction: the primitive has served as a coded other at least since the Enlightenment, usually as a subordinate term in its imaginary set of oppositions (light/dark, rational/irrational, civilized/savage). This domesticated primitive is thus constructive, not disruptive, of the binary ratio of the West; fixed as a structural opposite or a dialectical other to be incorporated, it assists in the establishment of a Western identity, center, norm, and name. In its modernist version the primitive may appear transgressive, it is true, but it still serves as a limit: projected within and without, the primitive becomes a figure of our unconscious and outside (a figure constructed in modern art as well as in psychoanalysis and anthropology in the privileged triad of the primitive, the child, and the insane).¹¹⁷

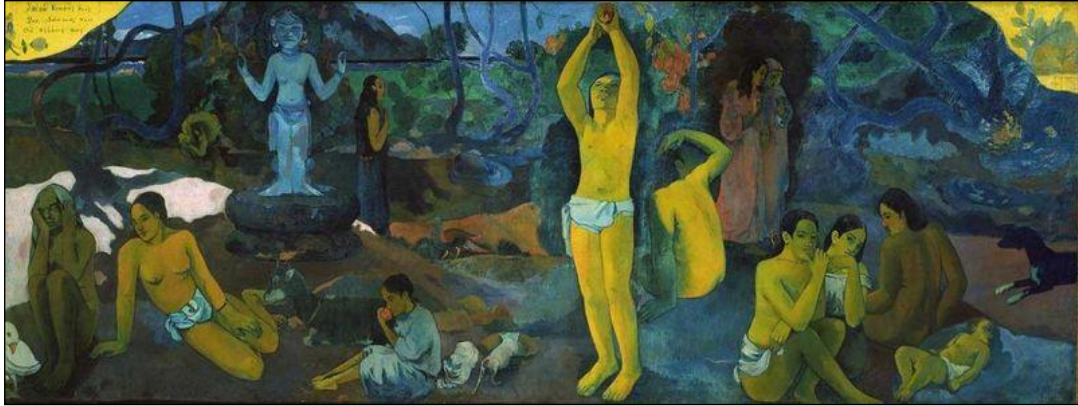
From both the “Age of Discovery” and the “Age of Enlightenment” to the “Age of Modernity,” European civilization has evolved *face to face* with the image of a barbarian *alter-ego*. Representing a dialectics of identity and difference, the “primitive” *other* was therefore incorporated into Modernism as “primitivism.”

Primitivism in modern art was first observed as such in the work of Paul Gauguin, a French (and Peruvian) post-Impressionist and/or Symbolist painter who was inspired by the non-western, traditional arts and/or cultures of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, where he finally settled in order to escape from European civilization. In Gauguin’s own words:

I am leaving in order to have peace and quiet, to be rid of the influence of civilization. I only want to do simple, very simple art, and to be able to do that, I have to immerse myself in virgin nature, see no one but savages, live their life, with no other thought in mind but to render, the way a child would, the concepts formed in my brain and to do this with the aid of nothing but the primitive means of art, the only means that are good and true.¹¹⁸

Such a romantic or *naïve* form of primitivism would be represented in his masterpiece *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* (1897), a reflection upon the nature of humanity and/or the meaning of life which evokes the imagery of a paradisiacal past (or a mythical Eden) with primitive savages and mystical figures from both Christian and non-Christian religious traditions. Yet if artists like Gauguin previously had to look abroad to encounter the primitive, artists such as Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso would eventually view exotic artifacts from afar in local museums. The techniques observed in African tribal masks would actually figure as a defining feature in Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)* (1895), a prototype of Cubism which would become one of the most important and controversial works of modern art. The painting (in)famously depicts nude women in a brothel with disfigured bodies and deformed faces, two of which resemble primitive masks. The work, in a sense, represents "a bridge between modernist and premodernist painting, a primal scene of modern primitivism" according to Foster, who describes the scene as a "double encounter" between the masculine and the feminine, the European and the African, in which both a "desire" for and a "fear" of the *other*, who is significantly both female and primitive, is manifest. For Picasso, "negro" masks were influential as "fetishes" with "magic" powers of mediation against the inimical forces of the "unknown" and/or "unconscious:"

Everybody always talks about the influences that the Negroes had on me. What can I do? We all of us loved fetishes. [...] The masks weren't just like any other pieces of sculpture. Not at all. They were magic things [...] The Negro pieces were *intercesseurs*, mediators [...] They were against everything – against unknown, threatening spirits. I always looked at fetishes. I understood; I too am against everything. I too believe that everything is unknown, that everything is an enemy! [...] I understood what the Negroes use their sculptures for. [...] They were weapons. To help people avoid coming under the influence of spirits again, to help them become independent [...] Spirits, the unconscious (people still weren't talking about that very



Paul Gauguin, *D'où venons-nous? Que sommes-nous? Où allons-nous?* (Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?) – 1897



Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O Version O)* (The Young Ladies of Avignon) – 1907

much), emotion – they’re all the same thing. I understood why I was a painter. All alone in that awful museum, with masks, dolls made by the redskins, dusty manikins. *Les Demoiselles d’Avignon* must have come to me that very day, but not at all because of the forms; because it was my first exorcism painting – yes absolutely.¹¹⁹

Despite the modern artist’s (s)elective affinities with primitive sculpture, which he would “use” as a “weapon” in a form of “exorcism,” Foster considers the *Demoiselles* to be an “extraordinary psycho-aesthetic move by which otherness was used to ward away others (woman, death, the primitive).”¹²⁰ The woman (as prostitute) could be seen as a threat to masculinity, death (by disease) could be viewed as a threat to life, and the primitive (as other) could be perceived as a threat to (self) identity. As both a “transgression” of convention and an “aggression” against contravention, Picasso’s *Demoiselles* paradoxically mediates “the primitive in the name of the West.”¹²¹ The incorporation of an otherwise *primitive* form of representation would ultimately influence the development of a *modern* style of painting – Cubism – that would in turn revolutionize the visual arts, while the evolution of modern art itself would (co)incidentally be related to historically traumatic processes of (neo)colonialism.

A modernist preconception and/or misconception *par excellence*, primitivism would be present, in some form or other, in the art of various avant-garde movements, beginning with Cubism. Influenced by the work of Paul Cézanne, who had once remarked that all objects could be reduced to the “basic” forms of the cylinder, the sphere, and the cone, Cubists such as Picasso and George Braque likewise reduced the object to the elementary shapes of the line, the plane, the cube, etc. Accordingly, fragmentation and abstraction of form become the predominant tendencies of an art that deconstructs objects into geometrically composed images that simultaneously depict intersecting planes and multiple

perspectives. Cubism as such *deforms* and/or *disfigures* objects into static, multidimensional images that bear little or no resemblance to nature, thereby challenging the norms and/or conventions of a “classical” art founded on the principle of *mimesis*. In opposition to classicism, modernism turns to primitivism, in effect, in order to formulate a revolution in the arts, inasmuch as supposedly “pre-modern” cultures presented new, alternative forms of representation and/or expression.

Drawing upon the innovations of Cubism, Futurism would actually define itself in terms of a modern “primitivism” which reflected a contemporary rather than “archaic” sensibility. In *Futurist Painting and Sculpture* (1914), Umberto Boccioni praises the monumental contributions of Picasso to the development of modern art, but criticizes the lifeless nature of an overly analytical Cubism, lamenting that, inasmuch as the Spaniard “copies the object in its formal complexity, taking it to pieces and numbering its various aspects,” he effectively “prevents himself from experiencing it in action.”

A painting by Picasso [...] presents, unrolls, upsets, give facets to, multiplies the details of the object ad infinitum. The vertical section of an object and the fantastic variety of aspects that a violin, a guitar, a glass, etc. can assume in his paintings, are a marvel similar to that of the scientific enumeration of the components of an object hitherto considered, out of ignorance or because of tradition, an indivisible whole. It was a historic discovery, necessary for art. It is the result of a long preparation, but it is still without emotion [...] Emotion, in modern painting and sculpture, sings of gravitation, displacement, reciprocal attraction of forms, of masses and colors, sings of movement, the interpenetration of forces.¹²²

Although Boccioni acknowledges the “historic discovery” of Picasso, he differentiates between the static forms of Cubism and the dynamic forces of Futurism, arguing that the former falls under the sway of archaism. In contrast, the Futurists, who are said to “have no past,” are presented as “the only primitives of a new and completely transformed

sensibility.”¹²³ Boccioni thus distinguishes between an “archaic” primitivism, related to classicism, and a “new” primitivism, related to modernism:

The study and therefore the influence of the archaic art of antiquity, of the Negroes, of wood carvings, of Byzantine art, etc., has saturated the paintings of our young friends in France with the archaism which is another evil brought about by this obsession with the past, a cultural phenomenon related to the influence of the classical world. Even if these influences from rudimentary arts are accepted for what they have that is new, and even if they have helped free us from classicism, they are still harmful to the development of a completely modern plastic outlook. That is why we call ourselves primitives. None of the Futurists, whether painters or sculptors, is tainted by that archaism which brings with it a hieratic immobility and an antique solemnity which repel us. I repeat – there is a *barbaric* element in modern society in which we find inspiration.¹²⁴

Boccioni therefore admits the innovations of Cubism but denies any future role for the movement due to its “obsession” with the past. Similarly, the painter accepts the novelties of “rudimentary” art but refuses the influence of primitivism for the development of a “modern” art. The Futurists are nonetheless denominated as “primitives,” inspired by a “barbaric” society that is characterized by technology, progress, and violence. In addition to proclaiming a modern primitivism, elsewhere Boccioni exclaims that advances in science have led to a new form of barbarism: “We futurists are of a higher barbarism and we have in us the ferocity and the ecstasy for the trespassing conquests that we feel prepare our ambitious rapaciousness.”¹²⁵ Inasmuch as *primitive* is a temporal description, the Futurists are ultimately “primitive” in the sense of being an early, (pre)historic development in modernism; inasmuch as *barbarism* is an atemporal description, Futurism represents a form of “barbarism” in the sense of depicting the savage, uncivilized aspects of modernity.¹²⁶

If a modernist primitivism emerges as objective formal innovation in both Cubism and Futurism, it also appears as subjective thematic exploration in Expressionism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. With roots in Romanticism, Expressionism reflected an inversion of

Impressionism, a founding movement of modern art. If Impressionism had sought to represent the impression(s) of an exterior (or objective) reality constituted by nature and/or society, Expressionism strove to recreate the expression(s) of an interior (or subjective) world constituted by feelings and/or emotions, generally of anguish, anxiety, or despair. The purpose was to *express* the inner content of a subject rather than merely represent the outer form of an object. Expressionism as such evolved from Die Brücke (“The Bridge”), a group of German painters who developed a style that effectively “bridged” not only the past and present of European art, but also the *primitive* and the *modern* itself. Like Picasso and Braque, artists such as Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff shared an interest in African and Oceanic cultural art(ifacts), inspired by the *expressiveness* of alternative forms of representation. In addition to Die Brücke (1905-1913), Expressionism developed from the art and principles of Der Blaue Reiter (“The Blue Rider”), a group founded by the Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky that exhibited a variety of styles and influences, which included primitive art from Asia, Oceania, Africa, and Latin America. In a manifesto by Franz Marc published in *Der Blaue Reiter Almanach* (*The Blue Rider Almanac*), both Die Brücke (1905-1913), and Der Blaue Reiter (1911-1914) are even characterized as “savages:”

In this time of the great struggle for a new art we fight like disorganized “savages” against an old, established power. The battle seems to be unequal, but spiritual matters are never decided by numbers, only by the power of ideas.

The dreaded weapons of the “savages” are their *new* ideas. New ideas kill better than steel and destroy what was thought to be indestructible.¹²⁷

Asserting a new “power” of expression, the so-called “savages” of Germany are represented as countercultural barbarians fighting against “old, established” forces. As such, the primitive is once more associated with the modern in the “struggle” of an avant-garde

movement whose “new ideas” serve as “weapons” in an otherwise *spiritual* “battle” to promote a “new art.”

The *expressive* aims of a “new art” inspired Expressionists to produce works that ranged from figurative to abstract art. If Cubism and Futurism both explored abstraction as a form of (objective) realism, Expressionism explored abstraction as a form of (subjective) spiritualism. Like Picasso, Kandinsky valued geometric shapes such as the triangle, the circle, and the pyramid, though the Russian attributed a (quasi) mystical significance to these forms that was related to spiritual (r)evolution. Kandinsky nonetheless saw in Cubism a “tendency to inertia, to a concentration on this form for its own sake, and consequently once more to an impoverishment of possibility,” which was the inevitable result of “the external application of an inner principle.”¹²⁸ In his aesthetic treatise *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (*Concerning the Spiritual in Art* – 1911), Kandinsky observes:

There are other means of using the material plane as a space of three dimensions in order to create an ideal plane. The thinness or thickness of a line, the placing of the form on the surface, the overlaying of one form on another may be quoted as examples of artistic means that may be employed. Similar possibilities are offered by colour which, when rightly used, can advance or retreat, and can make of the picture a living thing, and so achieve an artistic expansion of space. The combination of both means of extension in harmony or concord is one of the richest and most powerful elements in purely artistic composition.¹²⁹

For Kandinsky, harmony was based on a “principle of contrast” which was considered to constitute a timeless principle of art. Such a modern principle actually referred to an “inner contrast” that evokes both modern primitivism and the “primitive” origins of Western art. For example, the juxtaposition of the colors *red* and *blue* was explored not only by Gauguin in French Polynesia, but was also by “the primitive both in Germany and Italy.” Harmony or “concord” is therefore essentially seen as a form of *discord*:

The strife of colours, the sense of balance we have lost, tottering principles, unexpected assaults, great questions, apparently useless striving, storm and tempest, broken chains, antitheses and contradictions, these make up our harmony. *The composition arising from this harmony is a mingling of colour and form each with its separate existence, but each blended into a common life which is called a picture by the force of the inner need.*¹³⁰

Developing his principle(s) of art, Kandinsky thus argues that color, in addition to form, is fundamental for the development of an abstract, non-materialist painting. Color is said to have both a “*physical impression*” and, more importantly, a “*psychic effect*,” whereas form is said to have “the power of inner suggestion,” or else “a spiritual value of its own.”¹³¹ In order to formulate such relations, Kandinsky proceeds to consider the “mutual influence of form and color,” basically arguing that (outer) form is an expression of (inner) content:

Form, in the narrow sense, is nothing but the separating line between surfaces of colour. That is its outer meaning. But it has also an inner meaning, of varying intensity, and, properly speaking, form is the outward expression of this inner meaning.¹³²

Inasmuch as art is conceived as “spiritual” expression, Kandinsky ultimately relates the “language” of form and color to the expression of an “inner need,” the principle of which was to “set art free.”¹³³ The “inner need” reflects not only the subjective elements of personality and style, which varies according to period and country, but also an “*objective element*” defined as “pure artistry, which is constant in all ages and nationalities.”¹³⁴ Although the “realization” of such an “objective” and/or “pure” element leads to the recognition that “a rudely carved Indian column is an expression of the same spirit as actuates any real work of art today,” the expression of the “inner need” is still described in terms of progression:¹³⁵

It is clear, therefore, that the inner spirit of art only uses the outer form of any particular period as a stepping-stone to further expression.

In short, the working of the inner need and the development of art is an ever-advancing expression of the eternal and objective in the terms of the periodic and subjective.¹³⁶

The formulation of such *expressionistic* principles is thus colored in evolutionary language that would also be revolutionary, inasmuch as Expressionism developed into a movement and/or tendency that reconciled the ends of modern art with its otherwise “primitive” origins in both European and non-western traditions.

By evoking the (psychic) power of art as a form of spiritual expression, Expressionism represented an emotive, subjective aspect of modern primitivism. The primal scream of the new art was nonetheless silenced by the outbreak of the first “great” war (1914-1918), whose destructive effect disrupted the otherwise creative activities of the avant-garde. The first post-war movement to arise from the ruins was Dadaism, which in Germany attacked Expressionism due to its “melioristic philosophy” and “psychological naïveté” in the words of Richard Huelsenbeck, who produced and pronounced the “First German Dada Manifesto” (1918) in Berlin. The manifesto was signed by a number of artists and writers from diverse backgrounds who had grouped together under “the battle cry” of Dada in order to advance a “new art” and realize “new ideals.”¹³⁷ The reemergence of the “new” would, therefore, be characterized by the reappearance of the “primitive” in *reaction* and/or *counteraction* to the modern:

The word Dada symbolizes the most primitive relation to the reality of the environment; with Dadaism a new reality comes into its own. Life appears as a simultaneous muddle of noises, colors and spiritual rhythms, which is taken unmodified into Dadaist art, with all the sensational screams and fevers of its reckless everyday psyche and with all its brutal reality. This is the sharp dividing line separating Dadaism from all artistic directions up until now and particularly from FUTURISM which not long ago some puddingheads took to be a new version of impressionist realization. Dadaism for the first time has ceased to take an aesthetic attitude toward life.¹³⁸

With its anti-aesthetic “attitude,” Dadaism is thus distinguished from previous avant-garde movements, though it actually appropriated significant elements from Cubism, Futurism, and Expressionism in the development of its anti-art, whose “primitive” relation to a modern reality would represent yet another revolutionary moment in Modernism.

Described as both “the international expression” of the times and “the great rebellion of artistic movements,” Dada actually emerged as such in Zurich, where several artists sought refuge from the war.¹³⁹ In its various manifestations, Dada not only exhibited an anti-aesthetics of revolt but also propagated a politics of revolution via a synthesis of art and life. In an early retrospective account entitled “En Avant Dada: A History of Dadaism (1920),” Huelsenbeck recalls that the word *dada* was “accidentally” discovered in a dictionary by Ball and himself:

Dada is French for a wooden horse. It is impressive in its brevity and suggestiveness. Soon Dada became the signboard for all the art that we launched in the Cabaret Voltaire. By “newest art,” we then meant by and large, abstract art.¹⁴⁰

Founded in 1916 by the German poet Hugo Ball, the Cabaret Voltaire had become the center stage for the notorious “variety shows” of a new movement which gathered artists from diverse backgrounds. Ball had ties to Kandinsky, the Franco-German sculptor and painter Jean (Hans) Arp had ties to Picasso and Braque, and the Romanian poet Tristan Tzara had ties to Marinetti. In opposition to naturalism, Dada was thereby conceived as “a rallying point for abstract energies and a lasting slingshot for the great international artistic movements.”¹⁴¹ In addition to the polemics of (in)numerous manifestos, Dada performances included the recitation of *poèmes simultanés* (“simultaneous poems”), which effectively appropriated the theory of simultaneity and the practice of “bruitism” (“noise music”) from Futurism. Meanwhile, Dada exhibitions included variations of “the new medium” of collage,

which was derived from the abstract and/or synthetic techniques of Cubism. As Huelsenbeck observes, “the Dadaists of the Cabaret Voltaire actually had no idea of what they wanted” upon promoting several tendencies of “modern art” under one banner. Tzara, who would eventually become the self-proclaimed leader of the movement, had nonetheless been “one of the first to grasp the suggestive power of the word Dada,” thereby becoming “the prophet of a word, which only later was to be filled with a concept.”¹⁴² The meaning of an otherwise meaningless term would eventually assume an icon(oclast)ic significance, to the extent that “no word, no concept, no philosophy, no slogan of party or sect can be said to have burst upon the imagination of a civilized society with such catastrophic force,” according to Huelsenbeck.¹⁴³ The “suggestivity” of *dada* was therefore evident by the word’s “ability to hypnotize, by guiding the vulgar mind to ideas and things which none of its originators had thought of.”¹⁴⁴ In the end, the “immense effect” of Dada was ultimately due to its “senseless and comic character,” an effect which must have resulted from some “profound psychological cause” related to the contemporary socio-cultural reality of post-war Europe. Inasmuch as *cause* = *effect* for the (cross)purposes of Dada, the evolution of the name thus reflects the development of the movement itself:

Psychologically speaking! If you have had the miraculous good fortune to be present at the birth of such a “sensation,” you will want to understand how it happens that an empty sound, first intended as a surname for a female singer, has developed amid grotesque adventures into a name for a rundown cabaret, then into abstract art, baby-talk and a party of babies at the breast, and finally [...] This is exactly the history of Dadaism. Dada came over the Dadaists without their knowing it; it was an immaculate conception, and thereby its profound meaning was revealed to me.¹⁴⁵

If the history of Dadaism as an avant-garde movement was perceived as a momentous, albeit momentary, “psychological event,” the significance of Dada was arguably related to its absence of any “profound meaning” whatsoever. Not only did Dadaism

apparently negate art, but it also negated Dada itself. The “magic” of the word was therefore “of no importance” to the Dadaists according to Tzara, who also claimed to have discovered Dada. As Tzara would contrarily declare in his own “Dada Manifesto 1918:”¹⁴⁶



DADA MEANS NOTHING

Despite considering it “futile” and a “waste” of time, Tzara nonetheless comments on the multiple etymological, historical, and/ or psychological origin(s) of the word:

We see by the papers that the Kru Negroes call the tail of a holy cow: Dada. A cube and the mother in a certain district of Italy are called: Dada. A hobby horse, a nurse both in Russian and Rumanian: Dada. Some learned journalists regard it as an art for babies, other holy jesuses calling the little children of our day, as a relapse into a dry and noisy, noisy and monotonous primitivism.¹⁴⁷

Referring to both “negroes” and “babies,” Tzara observes that Dada was regarded as a “relapse” into “primitivism,” in opposition to modernity and to modern art as such. With its supposedly primitive nature, Dada is thereby said to have arisen from a desire for “independence” and/or “freedom” from the theories of Cubism and Futurism, which were described as “laboratories of formal ideas.”¹⁴⁸ If Cubism is “born out of the simple way of looking at an object,” Futurism sees the same object in movement, “a succession of objects one beside the other, and adds a few force lines.”¹⁴⁹ In contrast, Dadaism displays a new objective:

The new painter creates a world, the elements of which are also its implements, a sober, definite work without argument. The new artist protests – he no longer paints (symbolic and illusionist reproduction) but creates [...] All pictorial or plastic work is useless; let it then be a monstrosity that frightens servile minds, and not sweetening to decorate the refectories of animals in human costume, illustrating the sad fable of mankind.¹⁵⁰

Inasmuch as beauty had been declared dead, Dadaist anti-art was a grotesque “monstrosity” that strove, in some form or other, to “frighten” and/or shock the spectator. The Hungarian artist Marcel Janco, for instance, was known for producing “terrifying” masks for Dadaist “demonstrations.”¹⁵¹ Such an evocation of the exoticized African mask represented the *primitivist* character of an always contradictory movement that simultaneously promoted the “new” and/or “modern.” Tzara himself professed an admiration for “ancient” art due to its “novelty,” and even published both a “Note on Negro Art” (1917) and a “Note on Negro Poetry” (1918).¹⁵² While Huelsenbeck’s *chants nègres* recalled the “rhythms and semantics” of African songs, Tzara’s *poésie nègre* reproduced the “sound and rhythmic patterns” of African verse, ignoring semantics altogether.¹⁵³ As Huelsenbeck remarks, “Tzara ground out Negro verses which he palmed off as accidentally discovered remains of a Bantu or Winnetu culture.”¹⁵⁴ Although the authenticity of such “translations” was questionable, Tzara proceeded to incorporate the sound(s) of *otherness* into his otherwise senseless simultaneous poems. In sum, the nonsensical character of such Dadaist performances reflected the evidently anti-logical impulses of a movement that celebrated the order of disorder and explored the laws of chance. Tzara even describes logic as a “disease” that produces incestuous symptoms in art:

What we need is works that are strong straight precise and forever beyond understanding. Logic is a complication. Logic is always wrong. It draws the thread of notions, words [...] toward illusory ends and centers. Its chains kill, it is an enormous centipede stifling independence. Married to logic, art would live in incest, swallowing, engulfing its own tail, still part of its own body, fornicating within itself.¹⁵⁵

After such (il)logical conclusions, Tzara ends his (in)famous Dada manifesto with a barbaric call to “antihuman action,” exclaiming that “there is a great negative work of destruction to be accomplished.”¹⁵⁶ Such a “work” of anti-art must furthermore be realized “without aim or

design, without organization: indomitable madness, decomposition.”¹⁵⁷ Against beauty, psychology, philosophy, and morality, Tzara finally proclaims “bitter struggle with all the weapons of DADAIST DISGUST.”¹⁵⁸

Every product of disgust capable of becoming a negation of the family is Dada; a protest with the fists of its whole being engaged in destructive action: *Dada; knowledge of all the means rejected up until now by the shamefaced sex of comfortable compromise and good manners: Dada; abolition of logic, which is the dance of those impotent to create: Dada; of every social hierarchy and equation set up for the sake of values by our valets: Dada; every object, all objects, sentiments, obscurities, apparitions and the precise clash of parallel lines are weapons for the fight: Dada; abolition of memory: Dada; abolition of archaeology: Dada; abolition of prophets: Dada; abolition of the future: Dada; absolute and unquestionable faith in every god that is the immediate product of spontaneity: Dada; elegant and unprejudiced leap from a harmony to the other sphere; trajectory of a word tossed like a screeching phonograph record; to respect all individuals in their folly of the moment: whether it be serious, fearful, timid, ardent, vigorous, determined, enthusiastic; to divest one’s church of every useless cumbersome accessory; to spit out disagreeable or amorous ideas like a luminous waterfall, or coddle them - with the extreme satisfaction that it doesn’t matter in the least - with the same intensity in the thicket of one’s soul - pure of insects for blood well-born, and gilded with bodies of archangels. Freedom: Dada Dada Dada, a roaring of tense colors, and interlacing of opposites and of all contradictions, grotesques, inconsistencies: LIFE*¹⁵⁹

With its negation of art and affirmation of life, Tzara’s “Dada Manifesto 1918” coincided with the adherence to the movement of the painter Francis Picabia, whose vanguard activities in New York had previewed the international “spirit” of Dadaism, which would eventually move from Zurich and Berlin to Paris and other cities in both Europe and the Americas. Upon his appearance on the scene, Picabia immediately joined the ranks of important Dada spokesmen such as Tzara and Huelsenbeck, contributing significantly to the growth of the anarchic anti-movement and its subversive anti-art. In his own “DADA manifesto” (1920), Picabia echoes Tzara’s affirmative nihilism by asserting:

Dada itself wants nothing, nothing, nothing, it’s doing something so that the public can say: “We understand nothing, nothing, nothing.”

The Dadaists are nothing, nothing, nothing – certainly they will come to nothing, nothing, nothing.

With “nothing” else to declare, Picabia’s apparent disdain for both the artists and “public” of Dada alike would become most aggressive in his (in)famous “Manifeste cannibale dans l’obscurité” (“Cannibal manifesto in darkness”), in which the (dis)honorable audience is sarcastically insulted and “accused” of “snobbery” and more:

Vous êtes tous accusés; levez-vous [...] Que faites vous ici, parqués comme des huîtres sérieuses – car vous êtes sérieux n’est-ce pas. Sérieux, sérieux, sérieux jusqu’à la mort. La mort est une chose sérieuse, hein? [...] Vous aimez la mort pour les autres. A mort, à mort, à mort. Il n’y a que l’argent qui ne meurt pas [...] Honneur, honneur à l’argent; l’homme qui a de l’argent est un homme honorable. L’honneur s’achète et se vend cousine le cul. Le cul, le cul représente la vie comme les pommes frites, et vous tous qui êtes sérieux, vous sentirez plus mauvais que la merde [...] Sifflez, criez, cassez-moi la gueule et puis, et puis? Je vous dirai encore que vous êtes tous des poires. Dans trois mois nous vous vendrons, mes amis et moi, nos tableaux pour quelques francs.¹⁶⁰

Relating the “hopes,” “paradise,” “idols,” “politicians,” “heroes,” “artists,” and “religions” of a bourgeois society to “nothing,” the “Cannibal Manifesto” attacks the foundations of European culture not only with words, but also with images, as the (im)moral character of a modern civilization is once more confronted with the transgressive figure of a primitive barbarian: the cannibal. Published in Tzara’s *Dadaphone* 7 (March, 1920) and performed in darkness by André Breton at yet another Dada “manifestation,” the “Manifeste Cannibale” was followed by Picabia’s magazine *Cannibale* (1920), which also included a contribution by Breton aptly titled “Les contes du cannibale” (“Cannibal Tales”). An eventual rift between Tzara and Breton, who had recently joined the movement, over the aforementioned Congrès de Paris would lead to the dissolution of Dadaism and the revolution of Surrealism, the largest and most significant *-ism* of avant-gardism in Modernism.

MAISON de L'ŒUVRE
(Salle Berlioz)
55, rue de Clichy
Métro : Clichy - Nord-Sud - Troisième

Le Samedi 27 Mars, à 8 h. 15 précises

MANIFESTATION DADA

Prix des Places
Tenté d'orchestre : Les deux premiers rangs : 20 fr.
Autres rangs : 10 fr.
Baton : Les 6 premiers rangs de face : 5 fr.
Autres rangs : 3 fr.
Tous les droits compris.
Pour la location s'adresser :
A la Maison de l'Œuvre, 55, rue de Clichy.
Au Sans Pareil, 37, avenue Kléber.
Maison des Amis des Livres, 7, rue de l'Odéon.

programme :

- présentation des dadas** par Mac ROBBER
- le ventriloque désaccordé** par Paul DERMÉE
Personnages : le ventriloque... le marionnettiste... le ventriloque, Julien D'Yves
le marionnettiste... un homme
une jeune fille... un homme
- pas de la chicorée frisée** G. RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES
Interprété au piano par Mlle Marguerite Buffet
- dadaphone** par Tristan TZARA

11

- manifeste cannibale dans l'obscurité**
Lu par André Breton et accompagné au piano par M^{lle} Marguerite Buffet
Texte et Musique de Francis PICABIA
- tours de prestidigitation** par Louis ARAGON
- dernières Créations Dada** par MUSIDORA
- manifeste** par Philippe SOUPAULT
- le serin muet** pièce en un acte de G. RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES
Personnages : Ruyd... André Breton
Boris... M^{lle} Louise Bachelier
Oss... Ph. Soupault

1. s'il vous plaît Comédie de André BRETON et Philippe SOUPAULT
Personnages : L'Ysido... A. Breton
Une dadasoph... M^{lle} L. Duvet
L'Ysido... T. Frankel
Un Ysido... Ph. Soupault

2. e.emples par Paul ELUARD

3. manifeste à l'huile par Georges RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES

4. tableau par Francis PICABIA

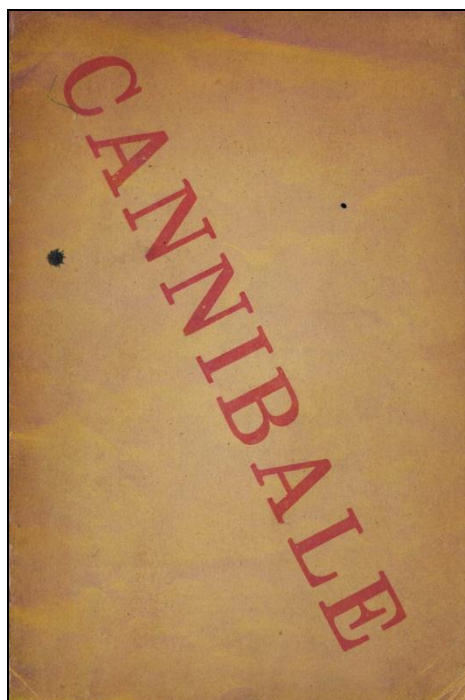
5. la première Aventure céleste de M. Antipyrine Double quatuor de Tristan TZARA
M. Blakish... Ph. Soupault
M. Crib... Louis Aragon
La femme exotique... M^{lle} Celine Arnould
Ph... Paul Eluard

M. Antipyrine... André Breton
M. Boudouan, directeur... G. R. D.
Noble Gaud... Th. Farniel
Tr. Taut... Tr. Taut

et un manifeste chanté par M^{lle} Hania ROUTHINE

VIERT DE PARAITRE : DADAPHONE N° 7. PRIX : 1 FR. 50
avec les photographies des Présidents du mouvement Dada
VIERT DE PARAITRE : PROVERBE N° 2, 3, 4. PRIX : 0 FR. 50
DADA société anonyme pour l'exploitation des idées
Administration : AU SANS PAREIL
37, Avenue Kléber

Dadaphone 7 – March, 1920



25 MAI 1920
CANNIBALE
revue mensuelle
paraît le 25 de chaque mois
sous la direction de
FRANCIS PICABIA
avec la collaboration de
tous les dadaïstes du monde

ABONNEMENTS :
FRANCE, un an : 10 frs
ETRANGER, un an : 15 frs
15 exemplaires de luxe numérotés
Abonnement : 50 frs

Administration :
"AU SANS PAREIL"
37, Avenue Kléber
PARIS (16^e)

Rédaction :
32, Avenue Charles-Floquet
PARIS (7^e)

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Tristan Tzara : Pastilles d'acier acide
Francis Picabia : Poésie pour ceux qui ne comprennent pas
Marguerite Buffet : Concours de Papillons
Francis Picabia : Je suis des Javanais
G. Ribemont-Dessaignes : Dadaland
Paul Dermée : Promenoir
Paul Eluard : Amour
— Le Joueur
Tristan Tzara : Douleur en cage Dada à la nage
André Breton : P.S.S.T.
Moi : Figue orgue
Vicomte de Funques : Sublime hasard
Celine Arnould : Mes trois péchés Dada
Carnet du Docteur Aison
G. Ribemont-Dessaignes : L'affaire Gleizes
Philippe Soupault : Fleurs de tomate
— Les cinq Frères
Francis Picabia : Le cul en tête à tête
André Breton : Les contes de Cannibale : Les reptiles cambrioleurs
Carnet du Caculin
Francis Picabia : Festival-Manifeste-Présbyte

Cannibale 2 – May, 1920

The return of the trope of cannibalism, a culmination of modernist primitivism, not so (co)incidentally coincided with a turn to the unconscious by the avant-garde. The cannibal once again represented the *other*, primitive side of modernity in the figure of a savage *humanimal* which reflected the barbarian *alter-ego* of European culture and/or civilization. The re(dis)covery of such an uncanny image from the depths of a “universal” psyche was arguably related to the popularity of Sigmund Freud’s theories and practice of psychoanalysis, which informed the artists and writers of both Dadaism and Surrealism, who would nonetheless apply the system through different means to alternative ends. As Breton observes in a manifesto entitled “For Dada” (1920):

Some have spoken of systematically exploring the unconscious. For poets, it is nothing new to let oneself go and write according to the vagaries of one’s mind. The word *inspiration*, which for some reason has fallen into disuse, was once seen in a favorable light. Almost every true imagistic innovation, for example, strikes me as being a spontaneous creation. Guillaume Apollinaire quite rightly thought that clichés such as “lips of coral,” whose fortune could pass as a criterion of value, was the product of an activity that he termed *surrealist*. [...] What most effectively threatens to harm Dada in public opinion is the interpretation that two or three false sages have given of it. Up until now they have especially tried to see in it the application of a system that is enjoying a great vogue in psychiatry, Freud’s “psychoanalysis” – an application, moreover, that the present author foresaw.¹⁶¹

According to Breton, Dada was not merely the “application” of a “system” for “exploring” the unconscious, although Freudian psychoanalysis was admittedly fundamental in the development of the art of *l’écriture automatique* (“automatic-writing”), a new “*surrealist*” technique which invoked romantic ideals of poetic “*inspiration*” and “spontaneous creation.” Automatic-writing had originally been associated with spiritualism, a belief in the reception by a living *medium* of communications and/or messages from dead spirits. In an early Surrealist text entitled “Entrée des Mediums” (“The Mediums Enter” – 1922), Breton aptly remarks:

I have never lost my conviction that nothing said or done is worthwhile outside obedience to that magic *dictation*. That is the secret of the irresistible attraction that certain individuals exert on us, whose only interest is to have made themselves the echo of what we are tempted to consider the universal consciousness - or, if you prefer, to have gathered (without necessarily grasping their meaning) a few words fallen from the “mouth of shadows.”¹⁶²

Despite the apparent reference(s) to spiritualism, Breton actually relates Surrealism to (psychic) automatism, a process by which unconscious mental forces act involuntarily and independently of the conscious mind. Automatism is furthermore said to “correspond” to the “dream state,” a state that both Breton and Freud sought to “delimit.” After the mock “funeral” of Dada, which might otherwise represent a *death of the father*, Surrealism would thereby emerge as a new revolutionary movement whose dream – *the fulfillment of a wish* – was to abolish the “reign of logic” or “absolute rationalism,” which places human experience in a “cage,” and to explore the depths of the unconscious in order to liberate the imagination and ultimately counter a modern *civilization and its discontents* with the revolutionary force(s) of the psyche. As Breton observes in the “Manifesto of Surrealism” (1924):

Under the pretense of civilization and progress, we have managed to banish from the mind everything that may rightly or wrongly be termed superstition, or fancy; forbidden is any kind of search for truth which is not in conformance with accepted practices. It was, apparently, by pure chance that a part of our mental world which we pretended not to be concerned with any longer – and, in my opinion by far the most important part – has been brought back to light. For this we must give thanks to the discoveries of Sigmund Freud. On the basis of these discoveries a current of opinion is finally forming by means of which the human explorer will be able to carry his investigation much further, authorized as he will henceforth be not to confine himself solely to the most summary realities. The imagination is perhaps on the point of reasserting itself, of reclaiming its rights. If the depths of our mind contain within it strange forces capable of augmenting those on the surface, or of waging a victorious battle against them, there is every reason to seize them – first to seize them, then, if need be, to submit them to the control of our reason. The analysts themselves have everything to gain by it. But it is worth noting that no means has been designated a priori for carrying out this undertaking, that until further notice it can be construed to be the province of poets as well as

scholars, and that its success is not dependent upon the more or less capricious paths that will be followed.¹⁶³

The surrealist (re)search for the “truth,” or reality, of the imagination would require a “means” for exploring and/or investigating the “depths” of the mind. Based on the “method” of Freudian psychoanalysis, Breton proceeded to develop a series of literary experiments in the form of “a monologue spoken as rapidly as possible without any intervention on the part of the critical faculties, a monologue consequently unencumbered by the slightest inhibition and which was, as closely as possible, akin to *spoken thought*.”¹⁶⁴ *Les Champs Magnétiques* (*The Magnetic Fields* – 1920), which was composed by both Breton and Philippe Soupault, would eventually be published as the first literary (and surrealist) work of automatic-writing. The results of such (ad)ventures, despite the apparent “overconstruction,” were reportedly “the illusion of an extraordinary verve, a great deal of emotion, a considerable choice of images [...] a very special picturesque quality and, here and there, a strong comical effect.”¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, what was most striking about automatic-writing experiments, “poetically” speaking, was their “*extreme degree of immediate absurdity*,” according to Breton.¹⁶⁶ By making no effort to “filter” or mediate the unconscious, by becoming, in a sense, “receptacles of so many echoes,” or even “modest *recording instruments*,” who were not “mesmerized” by the “drawings” or writings that automatically emerged, the Surrealists are ultimately said to “serve” what was imagined to be “an even nobler cause.”¹⁶⁷ That cause, in effect, would be freedom.

As expressions of the unconscious, not only automatic-writing but also dream narratives inspired the development of Surrealism, a movement which explored the reality of the beyond that lies within. According to the Surrealist manifesto, Breton ultimately believed in “the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly

so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a *surreality*, if one may so speak.”¹⁶⁸ In search of such a “*surreality*,” Breton would invoke images of “marvelous” beauty represented in the form of “romantic ruins, the modern mannequin, or any other symbol capable of affecting the human sensibility for a period of time.” Envisaging the (con)fusion of reality and imagination, Breton would therefore “baptize” what was described as a “new mode of pure expression” by the name of Surrealism, which was chosen in “homage” to Apollinaire.¹⁶⁹ Related to “supernaturalism,” the term *surrealism*, employed in its “special sense,” was given a new definition:

SURREALISM, *n.* Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner – the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by the thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern.¹⁷⁰

This literal definition, which effectively describes the technique of automatic-writing, is immediately followed in the manifesto by a philosophical definition, which identifies the fundamental problems to which Surrealism is addressed:

ENCYCLOPEDIA. *Philosophy.* Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipotence of dream, in the disinterested play of thought. It tends to ruin once and for all all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in solving all the principal problems of life.¹⁷¹

Believing in the “superior reality” of the imagination, the “omnipotence” of the dream, and the “disinterested play” of thought, Surrealism was marked by the interrelations not only between art and life, but also between word and image. Breton actually attributes the origin of the surrealist conception of the image to the “*a posteriori* aesthetic” of Pierre Reverdy, who had written that the image was “a pure creation of the mind” which was born from “a juxtaposition of two more or less distant realities.” As such, “the more the relationship between the two juxtaposed realities is distant and true, the stronger the image will be – the

greater its emotional power and poetic reality.”¹⁷² Following Reverdy, Breton also professes his own belief that images arise “spontaneously,” and are not “evoked,” by the approximation of “distant realities” when he describes how “*the light of the image*” springs from a “fortuitous” juxtaposition that in turn produces a “spark,” the “beauty” of which determines the “value” of the image.¹⁷³ A premeditated or voluntary action could not be the cause of such a juxtaposition due to the “principle of the association of ideas,” which leads Breton to conclude that “the two terms of the image are not deduced one from the other by the mind for the specific purpose of producing the spark.”¹⁷⁴ Instead, they must be perceived as the “simultaneous products” of a Surrealist activity, the role of “reason” being “limited to taking note of, and appreciating, the luminous phenomenon.”¹⁷⁵ Inasmuch as the “spark” of the image emerges from the unconscious and *in light of* the imagination, the medium of automatic writing is furthermore said to be “especially conducive to the production of the most beautiful images,” images that appear as “guideposts” for the conscious mind, which ultimately becomes “convinced” of the “supreme reality” of the images that ultimately serve to *enlighten* it.¹⁷⁶

Under the sign(s) of an automatic writing, and of the pictographic language of dreams, the *marvelous beauty* of Surrealist images is paradoxically created by means of words. Such “magical experiments with words” would lead critics such as Walter Benjamin, in his own profound “snapshot” of the “revolutionary” movement, to marvel at the multiple and contradictory interrelations that constitute the dialectics of Surrealism:

Everything with which it came into contact was integrated. Life only seemed worth living where the threshold between waking and sleeping was worn away in everyone as by the steps of multitudinous images flooding back and forth, language only seemed itself where sound an image, image and sound interpenetrated with automatic precision and such felicity that no chink was

left for the penny-in-the-slot called “meaning.” Image and language take precedence.¹⁷⁷

Benjamin’s reflections emerge from within the context of a text entitled “Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia” (1929), which was written almost immediately after the publication of Breton’s *Nadja* (1928), an autobiographical novel of sorts about hope, love, and beauty, in which the surrealist *integration* of art and life, word and image, is really apparent. One significant passage presents a star that is like “the heart of a heartless flower,” in the words of the mysteriously elusive character Nadja, who relates the image to Breton’s “great” idea of freedom, which he describes as “a perpetual unfettering,” or else, “the relatively long but marvelous series of steps which man may make unfettered.”¹⁷⁸ For Breton, “such *steps* are everything,” inasmuch as they “indicate” the path by which a seeker may find a way, or “means,” to free not only himself but also helpless others.¹⁷⁹ Breton elsewhere asserts “the idea that freedom, acquired here on earth and at the price of a thousand – and the most difficult – renunciations, must be enjoyed as unrestrictedly as it is granted, without pragmatic considerations of any sort.”¹⁸⁰ Freedom, as both an aesthetic and a political idea(l), was indeed a veritable cause for the Surrealist movement, whose expressed aim was to channel, or *mediate*, the latent and unconscious energies of the psyche into an active and conscious revolutionary force, in both art and life. In *Nadja*, Breton adamantly declares that “human emancipation – conceived finally in its simplest revolutionary form, which is no less than human emancipation in *every respect* [...] *according to the means at every man’s disposal* – remains the only cause worth serving.”¹⁸¹ The “revolutionary” rhetoric of Breton’s Surrealist masterpiece was complemented by a “revolutionary” poetics that re(dis)covered the power of the “outmoded” in the form of a past which was ever present. According to Benjamin:

[Breton] was the first to perceive the revolutionary energies that appear in the “outmoded,” in the first iron constructions, the first factory buildings, the earliest photos, the objects that have begun to be extinct, grand pianos, the dresses of five years ago, fashionable restaurants when the vogue has begun to ebb from them. The relation of these things to revolution – no one can have a more exact concept of it than these authors. No one before these visionaries and augurs perceived how destitution – not only social but architectonic, the poverty of interiors, enslaved and enslaving objects – can be suddenly transformed into revolutionary nihilism.¹⁸²

Surrealism as a movement was therefore “revolutionary” in the sense that it liberated the unconscious forces of the forgotten or repressed from the depths of oblivion. Inasmuch as the experience of the dream-state is related to the hashish or opium trance, the Surrealists ultimately sought to realize an *awakening* in order to “win the energies of intoxication for the revolution” in the form of a “poetic politics,” according to Benjamin, whose own writings were illuminated by the revolutionary dialectics of a theological materialism.¹⁸³

Surrealist artists and writers such as Breton were also “visionary” in the re(dis)covery of the primal relations between word and image, language and the world. In addition to its poetic prose, *Nadja* includes photographic images that effectively *illustrate* the text of the novel. Illustrations include various drawings by Nadja; paintings by Braque (*The Guitar Player*), Chirico (*The Agonizing Journey or The Enigma of Fatality*), and Max Ernst (*But Men Will Know Nothing About It*); and photographs of significant people, places, and objects, including a “conical mask from New Britain” and a “fetish” from Easter Island, which was said to be “the first example of primitive art” that Breton had ever “possessed.”¹⁸⁴ The aforementioned relations between modernism and primitivism are thus evident in Breton’s particular interest in both the modern art of the avant-garde and the “primitive art” of *other* cultures. In addition to pictures, references to exotic artifacts in *Nadja* include “a large Guinea mask which formerly belonged to Henri Matisse,” a “small statue of a seated

Cacique,” and another “fetish” of “the god of slander.”¹⁸⁵ As an archetypal figure of the modern(ist) imaginary, the primitive was naturally related to the European cultural unconscious, and therefore, in the mind of the Surrealist artist-as-ethnographer, “the other was figured as the unconscious.”¹⁸⁶ According to Foster, the primitivism of Surrealism, despite the evident fetishism, was arguably more “transgressive” than that of avant-garde movements such as Cubism, Futurism, and/or Expressionism because of “the surrealist reception of the primitive as a rupture.” In contrast to Breton, “dissident” surrealists such as Bataille especially present, via the technique of *bricolage*, “a model of how the otherness of the primitive might be thought disruptively, not recuperated abstractly.”¹⁸⁷ With an inevitably Eurocentric and modern perspective, the Surrealists were not, however, “oblivious” to “the contexts and codes of the primitive,” and would even politicize, rather than merely aestheticize, the controversial relations between modernism and a primitivism that was effectively founded on (neo)colonialism. Instead of attempting to “master the primitive’ or else “fetishize its difference into opposition or identity,” Surrealism ultimately “welcomed” the art(ifact)s of the *other*, just as it received the images of the unconscious.¹⁸⁸ Defined as a “primitive” mode of expression and/or representation *par excellence*, the technique of *bricolage* would *appropriately* be (pro)posed in the so-called Third World, according to Foster, as “a resistant operation, by which the other might appropriate the forms of the modern capitalist West and fragment them with indigenous ones in a reflexive, critical montage of synthetic contradictions.”¹⁸⁹ In Latin America, such an (ab)original practice would emerge as a modernist form of (cultural) cannibalism.



Plate 39, “Goodness, *Chimène*”

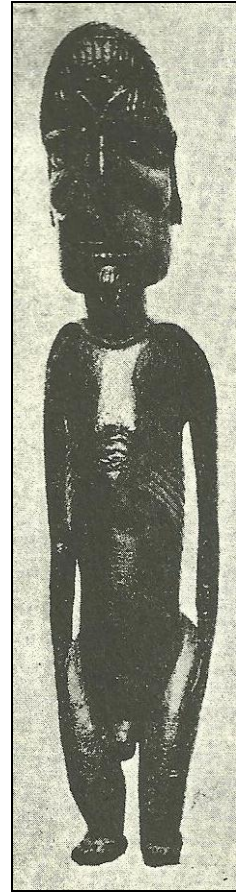


Plate 41, “I love you, I love you”

cultural cannibalism

Characteristic of the *international* avant-garde, the *interrelations* between modernism and primitivism would have another, different story in the Americas, where both the image of the “noble savage” and the figure of the barbarous cannibal had originated. It was indeed another ironic twist of fate that within the “grand” narrative of (Western) history, which touted the forward progress and onward march of a civilization that had given rise to the downfall of the rest of humanity, primitivism would come to represent a modernist *antidote* to the ills of modernity and/or modernization. Inasmuch as European and Latin American artists alike were captivated by Asian, African, Oceanic, and/or Amerindian cultures, “primitive” artifacts may also be said to have influenced “modern” art in the New World. For Europeans, the (re)current interest in *other* cultures was not only inspired by the possibilities of alternative forms of expression but also motivated by a new dis-regard of the Other as such, historically excluded and/or marginalized by predominant discourses of modernity and/or coloniality. In Modernism, the aesthetic and/or poetic re-creations of the mask of *otherness* by the avant-garde appeared to indicate an unconscious desire to represent alterity itself in order to identify the *other* as a difference within the same. As Foster observes, “the primitivist incorporation of the other” reflects not only a more subtle “form of conquest” than imperialism and/or colonialism, but also “its displacement, its disguise, even its excuse.”¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, as a “fetishistic recognition-and-disavowal of difference,” primitivism involves both “a (mis)construction of the other” and a (mis)recognition of the same.”¹⁹¹ Inasmuch as primitivism constitutes a “denial” of difference and/or otherness, a “counterdiscourse” would therefore only be possible by means of a “countermemory, an

account of the modern/primitive encounter from the ‘other’ side.”¹⁹² On the “other” side of the Atlantic, modernist primitivism was fundamentally related to a traditional nativism that had been formulated as a response to questions of identity and difference. Not only does the New World essentially constitute another world in relation to the Europe, but Amerindian and/or African cultures represent the *other*, unconscious past (and present) of Latin America, which in turn must locate its own alternative identity *in between* a modern civilization and a pre-modern barbarianism.

Despite representing the *other* side of Modernism, primitivism in the Americas has roots in the exoticism of Romanticism. While Europe turned to the Orient via *orientalism*, Latin America returned to the Indian via *indianismo*. Modernism, as such, presents a (re)vision of Romanticism and the image of the primitive as an exoticized figure of *otherness*. Like the romantic *indianismo*, the inspiration of modernist primitivism in Latin America was arguably most apparent in Brazil, where the influence of Futurism was also most evident. In its transcultural dialogue with the various manifestations of a European avant-garde, Brazilian *modernismo* may thus be described, in a sense, as a synthesis of *futurism* and *primitivism*. As critic Alfredo Bosi observes, the movement was comprised of “duas linhas igualmente vanguardistas:”

a *futurista*, ou, *lato senso*, a linha de experimentação de uma linguagem moderna, aderente à civilização da técnica e da velocidade; e a *primitivista*, *centrada* na liberação e na projeção das forças inconscientes, logo ainda visceralmente romântica, na medida em que *surrealismo* e *expressionismo* são neo-romantismos radicais do século XX.¹⁹³

Defined in such terms, both the *futurist* and the *primitivist* tendencies of Brazilian *modernismo* were already present at the Week of Modern Art, which in timely fashion exhibited the “new” and/or “modern” spirit of a movement that not only promoted innovation

via experimentation, but also renovation via tradition. After noting “points of contact” with Futurism, Mário de Andrade also cites relations with primitivism: “Our primitivism represents a new constructive phase. It falls to us to schematize and methodize the lessons of the past.”¹⁹⁴ Inspired by *l’esprit nouveau*, the otherwise “futurista” poet asserts that he neither sought to produce “modern art” nor “to attempt insincere and cross-eyed primitivism,” but rather, “an expression more human and freer from art among the hypotheses of psychologists, naturalists, and critics of the primitives of past ages.”¹⁹⁵ As such, the *modernistas* are ultimately described as “the primitives of a new epoch,” a statement which recasts almost *verbatim* Boccioni’s descriptions of the Futurists, who had been cast as the primitives of a new “sensibility.”¹⁹⁶ But if Futurist primitivism had arisen as a renouncement of the past, *modernista* primitivism emerged, in contrast, as a renewal of the past, a renovation of tradition in the form of aesthetic and/or poetic modernization.

Despite the apparent differences, the *futurist* and *primitivist* tendencies are actually (con)fused in *modernismo*, which also appropriated significant elements of Expressionism, Dadaism, and eventually Surrealism in the development of its art and literature. The polemical exhibition in 1917 of *expressionistic* paintings by Anita Malfatti had provoked diverse reactions from artists and critics alike, including Mário de Andrade, whose own work would also dialogue with that of Expressionist writers. In the preface to *Paulicéia desvairada*, Mário de Andrade also describes his method of composition in terms that (in)directly relate to *surrealistic* experiments in automatic-writing: “When I feel the lyric impulse upon me, I write without thinking all that my unconscious shouts out to me. I think afterward: not only to correct but also to justify what I have written.”¹⁹⁷ Such a self-conscious awareness of the impulsive *scream* of the unconscious and its *automatic*

transcription in writing is evidently informed by both the theory and practice of psychoanalysis, as Freud himself is even cited by name in the poetic manifesto:

Sir Lyricism, when he disembarked from the El Dorado of the Unconscious at the pier of the Land of the Conscious, is inspected by the ship's doctor, Intelligence, who cleanses him of quirks and of all sickness whatever that might spread confusion and obscurity in this progressive little land. Sir Lyricism undergoes one more visit from the customs officials, a visit discovered by Freud who called it Censure. I am a smuggler! I am against the vaccination laws.¹⁹⁸

Allegorically depicted as the mythical land of Eldorado, the unconscious is related to lyricism, which “smuggles” *contraband* in the form of sensations and/or sentiments. Meanwhile the poet, like “primitive man,” sings his lyrics in “the wild jungle of the city.”¹⁹⁹ Such a parodic tone, which was characteristic of Dadaism, is present not only in the preface but also in select poems such as “Ode ao Burguês” (“Ode to the Bourgeois”), which is not prescribed to be read by one who cannot “bellow.”²⁰⁰ With a title that sounds like *ódio ao burguês* (“hate the bourgeois”), Mário de Andrade’s diatribe duly “insults” a bourgeois audience and attacks its *culture* in satirical language akin to Francis Picabia’s “Manifeste cannibale.” Performed at the Week of Modern Art amidst a chorus of boos and hisses, the poem exhibits significant correspondences with Picabia’s manifesto, such as crude references to digestive processes and violent calls for death, including a savage appeal for cannibalism:

Eu insulto o burguês! O burguês-níquel,
o burguês-burguês!
A digestão bem-feita de São Paulo!
O homem-curva! o homem-nádegas!
.....
Eu insulto o burguês-funesto!
O indigesto feijão com toucinho, dono das tradições!
.....
Morte à gordura!
Morte às adiposidades cerebrais!
Morte ao burguês-mensal!
.....

Come! Come-te a ti mesmo, oh gelatina pasma!
 Oh! purée de batatas morais!

 De mãos nas costas! Marco eu o compasso! Eia!
 Dois a dois! Primeira posição! Marcha!
 Todos para a Central do meu rancor inebriante
 Ódio e insulto! Ódio e raiva! Ódio e mais ódio!

 Fora! Fu! Fora o bom burgês!...

The Dadaist spirit of appropriation found in Mário de Andrade's verses would eventually inspire an even more barbaric counterpart of the "Manifeste cannibale" in Oswald de Andrade's "Manifesto antropófago" (1928), which constituted a defining moment in Brazilian *modernismo*.

If Mário de Andrade was the most notable personality, Oswald de Andrade was the most notorious figure of *modernismo*, which after the Week of Modern Art would evolve along various currents. Different groups included Mário de Andrade's "desvairismo" ("hallucinism") and Oswald de Andrade's "pau-brasil" ("brazilwood"), whose radical internationalism was diametrically opposed to the reactionary nationalism of "verde-amarelismo" ("green-yellowism"). The celebrated "Manifesto da Poesia Pau-Brasil" (1924) presented a new poetics that effectively inaugurated a "native" primitivism, according to critic Benedito Nunes, though it shared affinities with that of the European avant-gardes, which had "corresponded" to the sudden "shock" experienced after the re(dis)covery of *la pensée sauvage*.²⁰¹ As Nunes observes:

Oswald de Andrade, condicionado por esse sobressalto, que já marca o Manifesto Pau-Brasil, tanto penderia para o primitivismo de natureza psicológica quanto para o da experiência da forma externa na estética do cubismo, que Apollinaire estendeu, sem esquecer de associá-la à exaltação futurista da vida moderna nos grandes meios urbanos, às manifestações da nova lírica, do *esprit nouveau* na poesia.²⁰²

Oswald de Andrade's primitivism, in its "convergence" of psychological and formalist tendencies, thus represents a synthesis of significant elements of the European avant-garde that informed the development of an alternative *modernismo*, which itself presented a dialectics of the universal *versus* the local whose resolution would only occur via the "neological" creation of both a new *language* and a new *logic*. The manifesto itself cites "synthesis," "equilibrium," "invention," and "surprise" as "destructive" factors for the construction of a nativist poetry for "export."²⁰³ Referring to the first economic product of Brazil, when the colony was constituted by the encounter between civilized European and savage Amerindian cultures, *pau-brasil* becomes an original metaphor for a new material for "export" that fundamentally reflected the new spirit of a newly rediscovered New World, where *modernismo* was formulated via the transcultural dialogue between an international avant-garde and a national tradition. A native primitivism inspired by nature and culture is thus complemented by a foreign futurism influenced by technology and the machine that was marked by both a new "perspective" and a new "scale."

O redame produzindo letras maiores que torres. E as novas formas da indústria, da viação, da aviação. Postes. Gasômetros Rails. Laboratórios e oficinas técnicas. Vozes e tics de fios e ondas e fulgurações. Estrelas familiarizadas com negativos fotográficos. O correspondente da surpresa física em arte.²⁰⁴

Invoking the sensibility of Futurism and the spirit of *l'esprit nouveau*, Oswald de Andrade presents an aesthetic "vision" that combines modern (universal) developments, such as "mills," "turbines," "factories," "elevators," and "skyscrapers," with traditional (national) elements, such as "prayer," "Carnival," the "sabiá" ("song-thrush"), "hospitality," and the "pajé" ("shaman"). Although the manifesto acknowledges the advances of the "futurist generation," which had effectively reset the "imperial clock" of Brazilian literature, it

recognizes that, afterwards, there was still *another* problem to be *resolved*: “Ser regional e puro em sua época.”²⁰⁵ Addressing the historically dialectical opposition between cosmopolitanism and regionalism, the idea(l) of the manifesto, according to Nunes, was ultimately to reconcile “a cultura nativa e a cultura intelectual renovada [...] num composto híbrido que ratificaria a miscigenação étnica do povo brasileiro.”²⁰⁶ Such a biological and/o sociological process of hybridization and/or miscegenation, according to the manifesto, would thereby produce a native “originality,” fruit of the transcultural *intercourse* between Europe and the Americas, which would also unite the “best” of both the traditional and the modern lyricism of Brazil, where modernity and/or modernism would be “digested” by an otherwise “barbarous” people.²⁰⁷

Following the nativist “Manifesto da Poesia Pau-Brasil,” the Verde-Amarelo group arose as conservative reaction to the “nacionalismo afrancesado” of Oswald de Andrade. Rejecting European influences altogether, the Anta school, a radicalization of *verde-amarelismo*, had (s)elected the Indian as a nationalist “symbol” of a heroic persistence instead of resistance. Upon being assimilated by the colonizers, Amerindians had purportedly conquered the Europeans through a *transfusion* of blood and a *transformation* of race.²⁰⁸ As such, the “objective” absence of the (ab)original Tupis was ultimately justified by the “subjective” presence of the Indian spirit in the national character of Brazil:

Os tupis desceram para serem absorvidos. Para se diluírem no sangue da gente nova. Para viver subjetivamente e transformar numa prodigiosa força a bondade do brasileiro e o seu grande sentimento de humanidade [...] Toda a história desta raça corresponde [...] a um lento desaparecer de formas objetivas e a um crescente aparecimento de forças subjetivas nacionais [...] O jesuíta pensou que havia conquistado o tupi, e o tupi é que havia conquistado para si a religião do jesuíta. O português julgou que o tupi deixaria de existir; e o português transformou-se, e ergueu-se com fisionomia de nação nova contra metrópole: porque o tupi venceu dentro da alma e do sangue do português [...] O movimento da Anta baseava-se nesse princípio. Tomava-se

o índio como símbolo nacional, justamente porque ele significa a ausência de preconceito. Entre todas as raças que formaram o Brasil, a autóctone foi a única que desapareceu objetivamente. [...] Entretanto, é a única das raças que exerce subjetivamente sobre todas as outras a ação destruidora de traços caracterizantes; é a única que evita o florescimento de nacionalismos exóticos; é a raça transformadora das raças, e isso porque não declara guerra, porque não oferece a nenhuma das outras o elemento vitalizante da resistência.²⁰⁹

Resurrecting the myth of the Tupi Indian, the neo-romantic nationalism of Verde-Amarelo represented a form of neo-*indianismo* that valued sublimation rather than confrontation. In contrast to the symbolic “totem” of an herbivorous *anta* (“tapir”), the emblematic figure of a carnivorous *antropófago* (“anthropophagite”) would thereby be evoked from the (Latin) American unconscious in order to oppose the modernist (re)vision of the “noble savage” as a cultural (stereo)type.

Inspired by Tarsila do Amaral’s *Abaporu* (“Man-Eater” – 1928), which would become the most significant painting in modern Brazilian art, Oswald de Andrade published the “Manifesto antropófago” in the *Revista de Antropofagia* as a critical response to the neo-*indianismo* of Anta. *Abaporu*, the tupi-guarani word for cannibal, is said to represent “uma figura solitária monstruosa, pés imensos, sentada numa planície verde, o braço dobrado repousando num joelho, a mão sustentando o peso-pena da cabeçinha minúscula. Em frente, um cactus explodindo numa flor absurda,” in the words of the artist herself.²¹⁰ Such a “monstrous figure,” a shocking image transcribed from the transcultural unconscious of an artist influenced by both the European avant-garde and the Latin American Baroque, would be transformed by Oswald de Andrade into the emblem of what would effectively become a “great intellectual movement.”²¹¹ A radical version of the modernist primitivism of Pau-Brasil, *antropofagia*, often translated as “cultural cannibalism,” represents both a descriptive and a prescriptive counter-discourse of *otherness* and/or *difference* as the basis of a



Tarsila do Amaral, *Abaporu* (“The Man-Eater”) – 1928

nationalist identity-as-alterity. In theory, such a (cultural) cannibalism refers to a process by which the consumption of foreign influences informs the production of a native art and/or literature, thereby forming altogether new and synthetic works via the dialogical and/or dialectical relations established between universal and local traditions. Inasmuch as the indigenous Tupis devoured their enemies in order to both literally and figuratively *incorporate* perceived strengths and/or qualities, European artists and writers are metaphorically *eaten* by their Latin American counterparts in a cultural practice of ritual (ir)reverence. As critic Antônio Cândido explains, *antropofagia* constituted “uma verdadeira filosofia embrionária da cultura” in the form of “uma atitude brasileira de devoração ritual dos valores europeus, a fim de superar a civilização patriarcal e capitalista, com suas normas rígidas no plano social e os seus recalques impostos, no plano psicológico”²¹² Benedito Nunes, in his comprehensive essay “A antropofagia ao alcance de todos” (1990), also relates how the “Manifesto antropófago,” in a “telegraphic” style, combines “a provocação polêmica à proposição teórica, a piada às idéias, a irreverência à intuição histórica, o gracejo à intuição filosófica.”²¹³ By invoking the practice of cannibalism, the manifesto furthermore evokes a plethora of interrelated images and/or concepts from the archives of modernity:

Usando-a pelo seu poder de choque, esse manifesto lança a palavra “antropofagia” como pedra de escândalo para ferir a imaginação do leitor com a lembrança desagradável do canibalismo, transformada em possibilidade permanente da espécie. Imagem obsedante, cheia de ressonâncias mágicas e sacrificais [...] tal palavra funciona como engenho verbal ofensivo, instrumento de agressão pessoal e arma bélica de teor explosivo, que distende, quando manejada, as molas tensas das oposições e contrastes éticos, sociais, religiosos e políticos, que se acham nela comprimidos. É um vocábulo catalisador, reativo e elástico, que mobiliza negações numa só negação, de que a prática do canibalismo, a devoração antropofágica é o símbolo cruento, misto de insulto e sacrilégio, de vilipêndio e de flagelação pública, como sucedâneo verbal da agressão física a um inimigo de muitas faces, imaterial e protético.²¹⁴

Shocking, scandalous, disagreeable, obsessive, magical, sacrificial, offensive, aggressive, bellicose, explosive, catalyzing, reactive, elastic, negative, bloody, insulting, sacrilegious, vile, and flagellant, “anthropophagy” is a word with multiple significance. In effect, to affirm the rite of “anthropophagy” was to negate the right of modernity to impose coloniality upon the New World. Just as the cannibal had once represented the *other* face of man behind the mask of a new humanism, the new barbarian devours his (arch) “enemy,” which is (neo)colonialism in all of its various social, political, and cultural forms.

In practice, the theory of (cultural) cannibalism involved the assimilation of an international avant-garde to a national tradition. As such, a Futurist aesthetics of innovation, a Dadaist theatrics of provocation, and a Surrealist poetic-politics of revolution were all *ingested* and/or *digested* via an alternative *modernismo* (dis)tempered by a native primitivism. The developments of Modernism were thus reproduced in a Latin America *under* development, where the modern and the primitive not so (co)incidentally coincided. As Cândido explains:

Ora, no Brasil as culturas primitivas se misturam à vida quotidiana ou são reminiscências ainda vivas de um passado recente. As terríveis ousadias de um Picasso, um Brancusi, um Max Jacob, um Tristan Tzara eram, no fundo, mais coerentes com a nossa herança cultural do que com a deles. O hábito em que estávamos do fetichismo negro, dos calungas, dos ex-votos, da poesia folclórica nos predispunha a aceitar e assimilar processos artísticos que na Europa representavam ruptura profunda com o meio social e as tradições espirituais. Os nossos modernistas se informaram pois rapidamente da arte Européia de vanguarda, aprenderam a psicanálise e plasmaram um tipo ao mesmo tempo local e universal de expressão, reencontrando a influência européia por um mergulho no detalhe brasileiro.²¹⁵

The reencounter with European influences via a re(dis)covery of Brazilian culture marked the return of cannibalism as a trope in the “Manifesto antropófago,” which is composed of a series of aphorisms assembled in the form of collage and/or montage that in effect advocates

a technique akin to *bricolage*. With the parodic motto “Tupi, or not Tupi that is the question,” which (re)cites familiar language from the creator of Caliban, the manifesto exalts “anthropophagy,” due to its exclusive power to unite “socially,” “economically,” and “philosophically,” as the “one and only law” of the world.²¹⁶ Such a law legitimizes cannibalism as a cultural practice and humanizes the cannibal as an *other* kind of man. As Oswald de Andrade declares: “I am only interested in what is not mine. Law of man. Law of the anthropophagus.”²¹⁷ Against the importation of modes and/or models of thinking, the manifesto negates the “canned consciousness” of civilized reason and affirms the “pre-logical mentality” of the primitive mind. Such a cannibal “law” or *logic* would constitute the basis of a revolution of revolutions for the consummation of mankind:

We want the Carahiba revolution. Bigger than the French Revolution. The unification of all effective uprisings toward man. Without us, Europe would not even have its wretched declaration of the rights of man. The golden age proclaimed by America. The golden age. And all the girls.²¹⁸

Invoking the memory of the savage Caribs, the “Carahiba revolution” would therefore realize a trans-historical synthesis of previous “uprisings” in order to establish a new “golden” age as “proclaimed” by the New World. The de-colonial rhetoric effectively *decenters* an enlightened Eurocentric discourse by *displacing* the origins of human “rights” to the Americas, which were located at the outer margins or periphery of the (western) world. As such, even the trope of cannibalism is appropriated into an arguably more appropriate context, the utopian (non)place where the figure of the *canibal* was born. Reclaiming his natural birthright, Oswald de Andrade thereby (pro)claims an ancestral lineage that evolves from barbarism through humanism, republicanism, romanticism, socialism and/or communism, surrealism, and finally, once more, to a new barbarianism that represented a dialectical synthesis between the modern and the primitive:

Filiation. The contact with Carahiban Brazil. *Oú Villegaignon print terre*. Montaigne. The natural man. Rousseau. From the French Revolution to Romanticism, to the Bolshevik Revolution, to the Surrealist Revolution and Keyserling's technicized barbarian. We walk on.²¹⁹

Forcefully advocated as a form of revolution that would, as such, reenact “justice as codification of vengeance,” (cultural) cannibalism was thus formulated as a “struggle” that involved the “absorption” of an otherwise “sacred enemy” in order to turn “taboo” into a “totem.” With its critical reference(s) to Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1913), a study of the so-called “resemblances” between “savages” and “neurotics” which (pro)poses a primal myth of patricidal cannibalism to account for the origins of human culture, the manifesto advocates a totemic “transformation” and/or “transfiguration” of inimical forces that also involves symbolic figures from a patriarchal Brazilian order.²²⁰ According to Nunes, such an “anthropophagic operation” entails a “devoration” of the mythical and/or historical “emblems” of society in order to counter a *prescribed* cultural tradition with a *proscribed* countercultural tradition, which includes iconic images from a “primitive unconscious.”²²¹

By transforming taboo into totem, Oswald de Andrade's *antropofagia* represents a transfiguration of the figure of the cannibal itself, from pre-modern monster to modernist mascot. Although both the European and the Latin American avant-garde employed cannibalism as a trope, the primitivism of the former arguably constituted a form of fashionable exoticism, while the primitivism of the latter reflected the unconscious presence of the *other* itself, a savage *alter-ego* in the flesh that metaphorically cannibalized the cannibal as a means of de-constructing and/or re-assembling its own hybrid transcultural identity-as-alterity from the dismembered pieces of the colonizer's body of work(s). With its revolutionary poetics of critical appropriation and original transformation, *antropofagia* displays (s)elective affinities with the Dadaist anti-aesthetics of revolt, as evident in the

similarity between the titles of Oswald de Andrade's *Revista de Antropofagia* and "Manifesto antropófago" and Picabia's *Cannibale* and "Manifeste cannibale." Such a correspondence was a "natural" consequence of modernist primitivism, according to Augusto de Campos, who nonetheless differentiates between the European and Latin American (re)visions of cannibalism:

Com os sucessos arqueológicos e etnológicos e a voga do primitivismo e da arte africana, no começo do século, era natural que a metáfora do canibalismo entrasse para a semântica dos vanguardistas europeus. Mas, dentro de DADA, o "canibal" não passou de uma fantasia a mais do guarda-roupa espantoso com que o movimento procurava assustar as mentes burguesas. Com Oswald foi diferente. Embora citasse expressamente Montaigne e Freud (Totem e Tabu é de 1912), é possível que ele tenha recebido alguma sugestão do canibalismo dadaísta, entrevisto nas viagens que fez a Europa, entre 1922 e 1925. Mas a ideologia do Movimento Antropófago só muito artificialmente pode ser assimilada ao Canibalismo picabiano, que, por sinal, não tem ideologia definida, nem constitui, em si mesmo, movimento algum.²²²

The "nihilism" of Picabia's *cannibale* is therefore *unrelated* to the "ideological utopia" of Oswald de Andrade's *antropófago*, according to Augusto de Campos, who acknowledges the significant difference between ritual anthropophagy and mere cannibalism.²²³ Despite the precedence of the cannibal in European modernism, the presence of cannibalism in Brazilian *modernismo* must instead be related to its antecedence in the Americas as an allegorical figure of the New World. Envisaging a new "golden" age, a modernist *antropofagia* clamors for revolution in order to inaugurate a future which was originally located in the past. Such a utopian mo(ve)ment paradoxically invokes a sense of both *progression* and *regression* that characterizes the primitivism of *modernismo*. As Moises argues:

Assim, o indigenismo, a antropofagia, o verdeamarelismo [...] constituem retrocesso, ao menos como visão da História e da realidade, uma vez que a utopia – fundamento universal das vanguardas – estava situada no passado e não no futuro [...] E assimilaram soluções futuristas, cubistas e outras, sem considerar que, assim procedendo, estavam-se submetendo, tanto quanto os

autores que abominavam, aos valores europeus, não obstante avançados ou vanguardistas.²²⁴

From a paradise lost to a promised land, the utopia imagined by (cultural) cannibalism was therefore *unsettled* due to its fundamental *contradictions*. Inasmuch as Brazilian *modernismo* “assimilated” the techniques of the European avant-garde, originality was preconditioned by imitation, while identity was predetermined by difference. Such an apparent state of *subjugation* was nonetheless *deconstructed* by the art of *conjugation* that *antropofagia* (pro)posed as a (re)solution to the dialogical and/or dialectical relations between European and Latin American modernisms. If the natives of Thomas More’s Utopia, a mythical island (co)incidentally located off the coast of Brazil, had learned the arts and/or appropriated the inventions of the Roman Empire before creating an ideal community, the “technicized” barbarians of Oswald de Andrade’s “anthropophagic utopia” devoured and/or digested the aesthetic innovations of an imperialist Europe in order to re-create a modern primitive society in the land of Pindorama, the (ab)original name for “Brazil.”

The re(dis)covery of ritual anthropophagy marked the evolution, in the emblematic figure of a transfigured cannibal, of an *alternative* primitivism that corresponded to the development(s) of an *international* Modernism. The dialogue between the European and Latin American avant-garde inspired a new, (ab)original practice of (cultural) cannibalism that described and/or prescribed the critical appropriation and/or original transformation of a Eurocentric tradition from an ex-centric position of alterity and/or marginality. Such a revolutionary counter-discourse of *otherness* represented a barbarous form of cannibal logic that (pro)posed an *other* thinking from the (non) *space-in-between* of a radical difference imposed by the history of modernity and/or coloniality. In the interstices of a deconstructed trans-modernity constituted by the trans-historical interrelations between Europe and the Americas, a post-modernist, (neo)vanguard return to *antropofagia* as a savage anti-tradition with (neo)baroque origins would ultimately seek to advance an unfulfilled utopian project from the “historical” avant-garde movement of Brazilian *modernismo*: the transculturation of a universal tradition by the new barbarians of the New World.

This section traces the evolution of (cultural) cannibalism in the “new” art and literature of Latin America. It begins with the reflections of Octavio Paz on the emergence of an *other* avant-garde in writers such as José Lezama Lima, Alejo Carpentier, Jorge Luis Borges, and Paz himself, and the considerations of critics Peter Bürger and Hal Foster on the significance of a neo-avant-garde in movements such as Pop Art. It then presents the “anthropophagic reason” of Haroldo de Campos as a radical return to the *antropofagia* of Oswald de Andrade, which in turn represents a transculturation and deconstruction of a

European discourse. It finally introduces “cannibal logic” as a theory that describes, in movements such as *concretismo* and *tropicalismo*, a Latin America under the sign of an *other* thinking.

neo-avant-garde

In the wake of Modernism and the avant-garde, the trope of cannibalism would be revived in the post-war, post-modernist context of post-structuralism and post-colonialism. With the publication of a series of texts entitled “A Crise da Filosofia Messiânica” (1950), “Um Aspecto Antropofágico da Cultura Brasileira: O Homem Cordial” (1950), and “A Marcha das Utopias” (1953), Oswald de Andrade reconsiders the otherwise magical rite of *antropofagia* as a “metaphysical operation” and reconceives a myth of history that ends with the dialectical synthesis of “natural man” and “civilized man” in the figure of a “natural technicized man.”²²⁵ Such a combination of nature and technology, the primitive and the modern, would constitute the culminating mo(ve)ment of an evolving cycle of utopias that had commenced with the discovery of the Americas and the encounter with the Amerindians. According to Oswald de Andrade, utopia was “uma consequência da descoberta do Novo Mundo e sobretudo da descoberta do novo homem, do homem diferente encontrado nas terras da América.”²²⁶ Essentially representing not only a “dream” but also a “protest,” utopia becomes “subversive” in its desire for a new (world) order, and is furthermore always marked by the “sign” of both “inconformity” and “revolt.”²²⁷ Utopia as such is revisited by Modernism and the avant-garde as a pretext for aesthetic and/or political revolutions. Although the vogue of primitivism in modern art would reevaluate the primitive art(ifact) of

the *other*, an ultimate realization of the “primitive soul” of man could only occur via the development of a “new sociology” and a “new philosophy” arising from Montaigne’s *Cannibals*, according to Oswald de Andrade, whose (cultural) cannibalism was expressly affiliated with the new humanism.²²⁸ Recalling the so-called heroic phase of Brazilian *modernismo*, the re-vision of a utopian *antropofagia* would thus inspire a return to a revolutionary avant-garde in order to re-create a new art in the New World.

Following the institutionalization of the historical avant-garde, the development(s) of a “new art,” a “new poetry,” a “new novel” or “new narrative,” and a “new cinema” in Latin America reflected the emergence of new mo(ve)ment that would eventually become known, in literature, as “El Boom.” A new avant-garde arose as a response to not only the Hispano-American *vanguardia* and Brazilian *modernismo*, but also to European modernism and the avant-garde. If Modernism was a response to both modernity and modernization, then a post-modernist (neo)vanguard was a response to another, different modernity founded on coloniality. The only viable reaction to such a *subaltern* modernity was a form of revolt, while the only practical counteraction was a form of revolution. And since both revolt and revolution were also hallmarks of the avant-garde, the Latin American apprentices sought to overturn the European masters in turn. Unlike previous aesthetic and/or poetic mo(ve)ments, however, the impulse for innovation arose primarily from Latin American sources, while the established hierarchy of cultural production was partially inverted by the reception of the new art, literature, and cinema in Europe. The old problems of originality *versus* imitation, innovation *versus* tradition, identity *versus* difference, were reformulated as new questions of an originality *based* on imitation, an innovation *rooted* in tradition, and an identity *founded* on difference. Another avant-garde re(dis)covered itself as both European and (Latin)

American, cosmopolitan and nativist, civilized and barbaric. The perpetual (re)search for a transcultural identity-as-alterity, a cycle which had begun in the Baroque and ended with the avant-garde, is thereby *recycled* and/or *renewed* in the neo-baroque, neo-avant-garde of Latin America, which in significant instances is marked by the exploration of new forms of language and/or writing that converge to represent an *alter-native* image of a New World.

The advent of another, different avant-garde in Latin American literature was recognizable as such, for example, in the poetry of José Lezama Lima (*La fijeza* – 1944) and Octavio Paz (*Libertad bajo palabra* – 1949; *¿Águila o Sol?* – 1951), and in the fiction of Alejo Carpentier (*El reino de este mundo* – 1949; *Los pasos perdidos* – 1953) and Jorge Luis Borges (*Ficciones* – 1944). In *Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avant-garde* (1974), a collection of essay-lectures that critiques both modernity and modern art, Paz observes both the “end” of the avant-garde and the “beginning” of a post-avant-garde in Latin America:

The beginning: a clandestine, almost invisible action. At first almost nobody paid attention to it. In a certain sense it marked the return of the avant-garde. But a silent, secretive, disillusioned avant-garde. An *other* avant-garde, self-critical and engaged in solitary rebellion against the academy which the first avant-garde had become. It was not a case of inventing, as in 1920, but of exploring. The territory which attracted these poets was neither outside nor inside. It was the zone where external and internal merge: the zone of language.²²⁹

Like the historical avant-garde, the “post” avant-garde experienced both “horror” for modern civilization and “attraction” for the “primitives” of Asia, Africa and/or America.²³⁰ Such an *other* avant-garde, displaced and/or dislocated to a territory whose borders mark the outlines of a (non)*space-in-between* language and/or the world, ultimately “accepted marginality and made of it their true homeland,” according to Paz, who elsewhere considers the (dis)position of a Latin America *under* development in relation to Europe. Against the problematic

conflation of economic and cultural (under)development, Paz reiterates his endless critique of the modern in an earlier essay published in *Alternating Current* (1967) entitled “Invention, Underdevelopment, Modernity,” which begins by observing that the “value” of art is determined by its “newness,” whether as “the invention of new forms” or as “a novel combination of old forms.”²³¹ Inasmuch as the “tradition” of modernity is based on the new, Paz chastises a new “so-called” avant-garde, particularly in painting and sculpture, for its uncritical “prolongation” of modernism as mere “repetition” in the form of a “comic spectacle” of various schools following one another in succession. Lamenting that there had never been such “frenzied, barefaced imitation masquerading as originality, invention, and innovation,” Paz recalls that the classical art of imitation did not hinder the creation of “new and truly original works.” The artist as such becomes a “living contradiction: he tries to imitate and he invents, he tries to invent and he imitates.” Consequently, in order to be really “original, unique, and new,” contemporary artists must disregard the “clichés” of “originality, individuality, and innovation.”²³² Envisaging the end of modernity as such, Paz thereby (fore)sees the “dawning” of *another* art, as the new becomes old and the future becomes *passé*:

The future is losing its fascination as the idea of progress begins to decline. The end of our idea of time also means the end of “world centers of art.” Today we all speak, if not the same tongue, the same universal language. There is no one center, and time has lost its coherence: East and West, yesterday and tomorrow exist as a confused jumble in each one of us. Different times and different spaces are combined in a here and now that is everywhere at once.²³³

With such a (pre)view of *another* time and *another* space, Paz envisions a (re)vision of art that is both “synchronic” and synthetic, a revolutionary poetics of presence, and of the present, that paradoxically represents both a return to, and the rebirth of, art as “collective

action” and “solitary mediation.” As such, the “new art” of the “new time” would ultimately reflect a “*spiritual*” and/or “mental” art based on “the idea of combination: the conjunction, the diffusion, the reunion of languages, spaces, and times. Fiesta and contemplation. *An art of conjugation.*”²³⁴

The reflections of Octavio Paz on modernity and modern art (pro)pose the problem of an *other* avant-garde in relation to both a historical avant-garde and to a neo-avant-garde in the New World. In an essay entitled “Primitives and Barbarians,” the Mexican poet and critic believes the Aztec sculpture of Coatlicue to be a “barbarous” (and not “primitive”) work that is nonetheless “wholly modern.”

Today, too, we construct hybrid objects which, like Coatlicue, are mere juxtapositions of elements and forms. This trend, which [...] is now spreading all over the globe, has a twofold origin: the collage and the Dada object. But the collage was meant to be a fusion of heterogeneous materials and forms: a metaphor, a poetic image; and the Dada object was an attempt to destroy the idea of physical objects as useful tools and the idea of works as valuable things. By regarding the object as something that destroys itself, Dada made the useless the antivalue par excellence and thus attacked not only the object but the market. Today, the successors of Dada deify the object: their art is a consecration of the artifact. The art galleries and the museums of modern art are the chapels of the new cult and their god goes by the name of the product: something that is bought, sold, and thrown away. By the workings of the laws of the marketplace, justice is done, and artistic products suffer the same fate as other commercial products: a wearing out that has no dignity whatsoever. Coatlicue does not wear out. It is not an object but an idea in stone, an awesome idea of an awesome divinity.²³⁵

By comparing and contrasting ancient Aztec sculpture with contemporary “hybrid objects” that originated with Cubist collage and Dadaist ready-mades, Paz reconsiders the relations of modern art to pre-modern art(ifact) that are repeated in the aesthetics of a neo-avant-garde that revisits historical avant-garde movements. In “Figure and Presence,” Paz comments on “the unexpected return of figurative art” in Pop Art, a movement that displayed



Monolith of Coatlicue

significant similarities and differences with both Dada and Surrealism. Despite its “reaction” to abstraction in the form of a concrete, “hallucinatory” realism, Pop Art was neither a “total rebellion” like Dadaism nor a “systematic subversion” like Surrealism.²³⁶ Instead, the movement not only accepted “the world of things” but was also accepted by a world that “possesses and uses these things.”

Neither rejection nor separation: integration. Unlike Dada and Surrealism, Pop Art from the beginning was a tributary of the industrial current, a small stream feeding into the system of circulation of objects. Its products are not defiant challenges of the museum or rejections of the consumers’ aesthetic that characterizes our time: they are consumer products. Far from being a criticism of the marketplace, this art is one of its manifestations.²³⁷

Despite his critique of the “products” of the neo-avant-garde, Paz views Pop Art as a “healthy trend” that, in the works of artists such as Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, represents “the poetry of modern life” as manifested in the world of “streets, machines, lights, crowds – a world in which each color is an exclamation and each form a sign pointing to contrary meanings.”²³⁸ Ultimately, as Paz observes in “The New Acolytes,” there appears to be a correspondence between “yesterday’s” European avant-garde and “today’s” American avant-garde inasmuch as “poetry anticipated and paved the way for a new pictorial vision.”

Dada and Surrealism were above all else poetic movements in which poet-painters such as Arp and painter-poets such as Ernst and Miró participated. In the United States, the phenomenon is being repeated in a slightly different form. The change began in the 1950s, and the spark that set it off was the rebellion of poets against intellectual and academic poetry [....] A few years later, around 1960, American painters rebelled – independently but in much the same way – against abstract expressionism. It was more or less a repetition of what had happened in Europe, especially in France, between 1920 and 1925. Repetition, of course, is neither absolute similarity nor imitation. The resemblance stems from the fact that the circumstances are analogous, and may be regarded as an illustration of the rhythmic law that I have mentioned above: a swing of the pendulum between periods of reflection and periods of spontaneity.²³⁹

Inasmuch as the “resemblance” between historical avant-garde movements and the neo-avant-garde illustrates the “rhythmic law” of a cyclical time characterized by revolutions and/or returns, the notion of “repetition” by analogy is distinguished from both “similarity” and “imitation.” In a sense, *repetition* is not identity but *difference*, inasmuch as analogy infers a correspondence by means of *other* relations. Paz perceives such a form of repetition in the concrete poetry movement of Brazil, which constituted “a genuine avant-garde in the strictest sense of the word,” but criticizes the so-called new “acolytes” of Hispano-American poetry for imitating the “poetic revolution” of their (North) American contemporaries, a movement that had already occurred in Latin America. Initiated by the avant-garde poetics of Vicente Huidobro and José Juan Tablada, the revolutionary movement culminated in “two moments that are true zeniths:” the socialist-realism of Pablo Neruda and César Vallejo, and the *other* avant-garde of Lezama Lima and Octavio Paz himself. Such an *other* avant-garde, in relation to a *neo*-avant-garde, thus realizes the utopian dream of a historical avant-garde, whose end would inspire *another* reawakening.

In terms of repetition, Paz’s theory of the neo-avant-garde appears to anticipate the critic Peter Bürger’s *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974), an important study that analyzes both the production and the reception of historical avant-garde movements and the “avant-gardiste” work of art. According to Bürger, art had entered a “post-avant-gardiste” period, characterized by a “revival of the category of work,” in which “procedures invented by the avant-garde with antiartistic intent are being used for artistic ends.”²⁴⁰ Despite such intentions, any and all attempts to return to an avant-garde “tradition” are considered to be effectively useless:

Even today, of course, attempts are made to continue the tradition of avant-garde movements (that this concept can be put on paper without being a

conspicuous oxymoron shows again that the avant-garde has become historical). But these attempts, such as the happenings, for example, which could be called neo-avant-gardiste, can no longer attain the protest value of Dadaist manifestations, even though they may be prepared and executed more perfectly than the former.²⁴¹

Described in oxymoronic terms, an ever contradictory neo-avant-garde is devalued “even though” its manifestation, in a sense, *surpasses* that of its predecessors. In a footnote, Bürger thus rejects an “affirmative function” for “neo-avant-gardiste art” because of the “divergence” not only between Dadaism and Surrealism, but also between the historical avant-garde and the neo-avant-garde. Instead, movements such as Pop Art perform a negative function by reviving both the “work” and the “institution” of art. The purported ineffectiveness of “avant-gardistes’ effects” is not only due to an evident loss of “shock value,” but is also the consequence of the apparent inability of the avant-garde to reintegrate art and life. In the context of a *neo-avant-garde*, the renewal of “avant-gardiste intentions” with “the means of avant-gardism” could never hope to achieve even the “limited effectiveness” of the historical avant-garde because its (anti) art has already become institutionalized. In other words, “the neo-avant-garde institutionalizes the *avant-garde as art* and thus negates genuinely avant-gardiste intentions. This is true independently of the consciousness artists have of their activity, a consciousness that may perfectly well be avant-gardiste.”²⁴² In yet another footnote, Bürger cites the example of concrete poetry, whose intention was arguably both a “sublation” of art and praxis of life akin to that of surrealist poetry, whose revolution was never realized. The message *repeatedly* seems to be: *If at first you don’t succeed, DON’T try again*. Interestingly enough, the supposed “failure” of the historical avant-garde in politics is countered by its “decisive” success in aesthetics, where it has indeed produced a significant “revolutionary effect.”²⁴³ Despite conceding the aesthetic

significance of the historical avant-garde, Bürger condemns what would seem to be a senseless repetition in movements such as Pop Art, ultimately arguing that “the neo-avant-garde, which stages for a second time the avant-gardiste break with tradition, becomes a manifestation that is void of sense and that permits the positing of any meaning whatsoever.”²⁴⁴

Any comprehensive theory of the avant-garde must not only consider the relation(s) between the historical and *neo* avant-garde but also the question of the *new* in art. In the insightful essay “What’s Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde” (1994), Hal Foster returns to Bürger’s work in order to reconsider the problem(s) of repetition and the neo-avant-garde, which is itself classified as “a loose grouping” of (North) American and (Western) European artists who had “reprised” and/or “revised” historical avant-garde techniques such as “collage and assemblage, the readymade and the grid, monochrome painting and constructed sculpture.”²⁴⁵ In order to recast the neo-avant-garde in a different light, Foster re-reads an essay by Michel Foucault – “What is an Author?” (1969) – which redefines an “author” to be a “function of discourse.”²⁴⁶ For example, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud are authors inasmuch as “both established the endless possibilities of discourse,” namely Marxism and psychoanalysis. As “initiators of discursive practices,” such authors “not only made possible a certain number of analogies that could be adopted by future texts, but, as importantly, they also made possible a certain number of differences.” Such “differences” are ultimately marked by the introduction of new and/or “other” elements that emerge from within the discourse itself. In the course of development of any discourse as such, there must eventually and effectively occur a “return to the origin,” a re(dis)covery that culminates in an original transformation. In other words, a “return to the act of initiation” of a discourse

always involves “a return to a text in itself,” or particularly to “those things registered in the interstices of the text, its gaps and absences.” In the end, such a return “constantly introduces modifications” that would “redouble” the original discourse, thereby becoming “an effective and necessary means of transforming discursive practice.”²⁴⁷

According to Foster, the “implication” of Foucault’s essay, particularly his remarks on the contemporary return(s) to Marx (presumably by Louis Althusser) and Freud (presumably by Jacques Lacan), is that a truly “radical” re-reading, by returning to the “root” (*radix*), will not be “another accretion of the discourse” but instead will “cut through the layers of paraphrase and pastiche that have obscured its theoretical core and blunted its political edge.”²⁴⁸ Consequently, the “stake of the return” is always “the *structure* of the discourse stripped of additions.”²⁴⁹ Once the structure has been *deconstructed*, the origin of the discourse is *transformed*. Foster thereby proceeds to reformulate his initial question about the *neo* in the neo-avant-garde by asking whether or not, “amid all the repetitions in postwar art,” there are any “returns” in the “radical sense” (pro)posed by Foucault.²⁵⁰ In response, Foster paradoxically claims that, “*rather than cancel the historical avant-garde, the neo-avant-garde enacts its project for the first time.*”²⁵¹ Illustrating the model of “repression” and “repetition” developed in Freudian psychoanalysis, such a reenactment would occur as a deferred reaction to a traumatic experience, according to Foster, who concludes that both the historical and the neo-avant-garde likewise reflect “a continual process of protension and retension, a complex relay of reconstructed past and anticipated future” which, in effect, “throws over any simple scheme of before and after, cause and effect, origin and repetition.”²⁵² The reinterpretation of an aesthetic theory via the

reapplication of a psychological discourse ultimately asserts the trans-historical interrelations between movements that effectively form an avant-garde tradition:

It is in all these ways that the neo-avant-garde acts on the historical avant-garde as much as it is acted on by it; that [...] the avant-garde project in general develops in deferred action. Once repressed in part, the avant-garde did return, and it continues to return, but always from the future: such is its paradoxical temporality.²⁵³

What is *neo* about an *other* avant-garde in Latin America? Foster's reconsideration of the neo-avant-garde unconsciously repeats a post-modernist (re)vision of Modernism that ignores the peripheral and/or marginal manifestations that characterize its *international* development. In a "partial" response to the original question, critic Gonzalo Moises Aguilar describes the relations between the historical avant-garde and the neo-avant-garde in terms of "difference" and/or "repetition:"

Como práticas localizadas em um contexto com o qual se propunham a interagir, as neovanguardas emergiram de sua própria diferença: no caso da poesia concreta, os deslocamentos que realizou nas novas condições brasileiras dos anos 1950. Porém, para além das diferenças, e tal como afirma o próprio Foster, tampouco se deve excluir as simularidades e as repetições quando se quer narrar essa relação [...] Essa linha de abertura ao novo mediante a repetição foi crucial na prática neovanguardista [...] Logo, na repetição, *o arquivo se converteu em prática*.²⁵⁴

The "difference" of a neo-avant-garde in Latin America was not only the result of a "new" historical and cultural context but also the consequence of a "repetition" whose *newness* derived from its significant "deviation" from the historical avant-garde, according to Aguilar, who describes such a form of "retroactive transformation" as an act of "retroactive violence." In practice, the (neo)vanguard movement of concrete poetry, which constituted a "revision" of both the European avant-garde and Brazilian *modernismo*, therefore included a radical return to the *antropofagia* of Oswald de Andrade. Far from representing an insular development, the (cultural) cannibalism practiced in Brazil ultimately reflects the

transcultural dialogue of revolt by an *other* avant-garde in Latin America, whose revolutionary reenactments effectively realized a displacement of Modernism from its Eurocentric origins to the ex-centric borders of a hybrid (non) *space-in-between*.

anthropophagic reason

The (re)vision of (cultural) cannibalism in the context of an *other* (neo) avant-garde in Latin America represented a renewal of the innovation and/or experimentation of Brazilian *modernismo*. Inspired by the precepts of the “Manifesto antropófago,” movements such as *concretismo* and *tropicalismo* would return to the original text in itself, form(ulat)ed as a series of aphorisms replete with gaps and absences, and not only reproduced analogies but also introduced differences in order to, in effect, transform both theory and practice. In a retrospective essay aptly titled “Da Razão Antropofágica: A Europa sob o signo da devoração” (“The Rule of Anthropophagy: Europe Under the Sign of Devoration” – 1981), which begins by reconsidering the prospects of a (neo) avant-garde in a New World *under* development, concrete poet and critic Haroldo de Campos returns to Oswald de Andrade in order to explore the fundamental role of an “anthropophagic reason” that had originated in the Baroque and culminated in the so-called “neobaroque” manifestations of Latin American literature. For Campos, the Baroque constitutes the “non-origin,” or “non-infancy,” of a culture that was born *in medias res* as “difference” and/or “otherness.”

I will say that for us the Baroque is the non-origin, because it is a non-infancy. Our literatures, which emerged with the Baroque, had no infancy (*infans*: he who does not speak). They were never aphasic. They were born adults (like certain mythological heroes), speaking an extremely elaborate international code: the Baroque rhetorical code [...] To articulate itself as a difference, in relationship to this panoply of *universalia*: this is our “birth” as a literature, a

sort of partogenesis without an ontological egg (we could say – the difference as origin or the egg of Columbus).²⁵⁵

In dialogue with the anti-logocentrism of Derrida's *De la grammatologie* (*Of Grammatology* – 1967), an erudite Campos also refers to Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1928), particularly to the German critic's reflections on the concept of allegory, defined as a "form of expression" in which "any person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else."²⁵⁶ Campos thereby recognizes in allegorical writing a differential code of "otherness" that, when reformulated by the *other* as such, becomes a form of double articulation:

To speak the Baroque code, in the literature of Colonial Brazil, was to try to extract the difference of the morphosis of the same. As the allegorical style of the Baroque was an alternative speech [...] the "alternating current" of the Baroque *brasilica* was a double speech of the other as difference: to speak a code of otherness and to speak it in a state of otherness.²⁵⁷

From the past to the present, an alternative "current" of Latin American writers have come to enunciate "the difference in the gaps of a universal code" via a literature that has articulated its identity as a "double difference," or a "difference of the different:" the allegorical (codical) difference *plus* the historical (colonial) difference. The formation of an *other* literature would therefore involve the transformation of a "world literature" whose *locus* must be *dislocated* to the shores of the New World.

From its Baroque (non) origins to its (neo)vanguard manifestations, the (r)evolution of Latin American literature has been ruled by the operation(s) of a deconstructive "anthropophagic reason" that represents the counter-discourse of an alternative modernity. The foundation of an *other, different* tradition reclaims that which is both within and outside a historical tradition by means of a critical appropriation and an original transformation of the

(western) literary canon. Such an “anti-tradition” is form(ulat)ed in terms of both difference (in relation to sameness) and otherness (in relation to identity). As Campos observes:

Already in the Baroque a possible “rule of anthropophagy” develops; it deconstructs the logocentrism we inherited from the West. Differential within the Universal, it began with the Baroque distortions and contortions of a discourse which could disentangle us from the same. It is an anti-tradition which passes through the gaps of traditional historiography, which filters through its breaks, which edges through its fissures. This is not based on a directly derived anti-tradition — for this would be the substitution of one linearity for another — but on the recognition of certain marginal paths or patterns alongside the preferred course of normative historiography [...] Another mode of thought, skillfully projected over the first chronographic trace, de-linearizing it on behalf of a new possibility for a meaningful section of the same space, now re-organized in a different constellation.²⁵⁸

Unlike the lineage of a “normative” and/or “historiographical” tradition, a nonlinear “anti-tradition” re-draws its “marginal” lines of development in the form of a diagrammatic “constellation” of interrelations. Defined as an *other* “mode” of thinking, an anthropophagic reason thus re-writes history as a “product” of a “re-configuring appropriation” that both *disfigures* and *transfigures* both global and local tradition(s). Not so (co)incidentally, a “new possibility” for re-reading the canon arose with a “re-evaluation” of the inventive works of Oswald de Andrade, whose (cultural) cannibalism had re-synthesized a national tradition and its native culture with an international tradition and its universal culture. For Campos, in *antropofagia* there appears “a need to consider the national element in a dialogical and dialectic relationship with the universal.”²⁵⁹ An otherwise transcultural dialogue between Latin America and Europe is fundamentally marked by a contrast and/or opposition that would only be resolved by a “negation” of the (im)position of tradition and/or history as such via the (in)famous myth of the man-eating cannibal, the modernist antagonist *par excellence*:

Oswald’s “Anthropophagy” [...] is the thought of critical devoration of the universal cultural heritage, formulated not from the insipid, resigned perspective of the “noble savage” [...] but from the point of view of the “bad

savage,” devourer of whites – the cannibal. The latter view does not involve a submission (an indoctrination), but a transculturation, or better, a “transvalorization:” a critical view of History as a negative function (in Nietzsche’s sense of the term), capable of appropriation and expropriation, de-hierarchization, deconstruction. Any past which is an “other” for us deserves to be negated. We could say that it deserves to be eaten, devoured.²⁶⁰

As a “transculturation” of a universal culture and a “transvalorization” of western history, *antropofagia* thus launches its deconstructive logic and anti-colonial rhetoric against a Eurocentric discourse of modernity founded on coloniality. The re(dis)covery of an anthropophagic reason and its corresponding anti-tradition “retroactively” operates on the Baroque and proactively functions as the catalyst for a neo-baroque mo(ve)ment in Latin American literature, which is characterized by the re-writings of an *other* (neo) avant-garde.²⁶¹

From the utopian (non) *space-in-between* of a New World dis-located at the margins of modernity, the “cosmic-philosophical-existentialist” (re)vision of an anthropophagic reason, which counters the cultural “legacy” of European civilization, both describes and prescribes the “planetary devoration” performed by the so-called “Alexandrian barbarians,” the (neo)vanguard Latin American writers who, “supplied with chaotic libraries and labyrinthine card catalogues,” both re-read and re-write an *other* anti-tradition within the *corpus* of a “world literature.”²⁶² Citing the examples of Jorge Luis Borges in Buenos Aires, Alfonso Reyes in Mexico City, Mário de Andrade in São Paulo, and Lezama Lima in Havana, Campos contextualizes the inter-textual textures of the hybrid texts re-produced by the “new barbarians” who savagely confront a “global” civilization with an “ex-centrifing” *otherness* and a “deconstructing” *difference*:

For some time these new barbarians’ devouring jaws have been gnawing at and “ruining” a cultural heritage that is ever more global, in relationship to which its ex-centrifing and deconstructing attack functions with the marginal

impetus of the carnivalesque de-sacralizing, profaning anti-tradition, evoked [...] in counterpoint to [...] monological literature, to the closed, single-voiced work. In contrast, the combinatory and ludibrious poly-culturalism, the parodic transmutation of meaning and values, the open, multi-lingual hybridization, are the devices responsible for the constant feeding and re-feeding of this Baroque soulmoment, the carnivalized transcyclopedia of the new barbarians, where everything can coexist with everything. They are mechanisms which crush the material of tradition with the teeth of a tropical sugar-mill, changing stalks and protective coverings into husks and cane syrup.²⁶³

In the convolutions of his revolutionary poetic prose, Campos relates how the (cultural) cannibalism of the “new barbarians” corresponds to the dialogical process of *carnivalization* as described by Mikhail Bakhtin. As a subaltern (sub)version of tradition, an anthropophagic reason enacts the *transformation* of a “world” literature, the *transculturation* of a “universal” culture, the *transvalorization* of “western” history, and finally, the *transmutation* of “meaning” and/or “values” via a *transaction* that both describes and prescribes the transcription, or *transcreation*, of a global (de)sign into a local dialect(ics). If Lezama Lima “creolizes” Marcel Proust, Julio Cortázar “dialogues” with James Joyce, and Octavio Paz responds to Mallarmé, such writers would come to represent an *other* (neo) avant-garde that would become known and renowned as the “Boom” generation. With the advent of such a mo(ve)ment, “the European discovered he could no longer write his world prose without the increasingly devastating contribution made by the Alexandrian barbarians,” according to Campos, who from an “ex-centric” perspective observes how the new barbarians “rewrite,” or in other words, “re-chew,” the writings of the modern, civilized world from the borders of a New World:

Today, both in Europe and Latin America, to write means, more and more, to rewrite, to re-chew. *Oi barbaroi* [...] The logocentric writers, who imagined themselves to be the privileged masters of a proud one-way *koiné*, must prepare themselves for the increasingly urgent task of recognizing and redevouring the differential marrow of the new barbarians of the polytopic

and polyphonic planetary civilization [...] Otherness is, above all, a necessary exercise in self-criticism.²⁶⁴

cannibal logic

With Europe under the sign of devoration, a revolutionary cannibal logic rules a Latin America under the sign of an *other* thinking. Although such a form of (cultural) cannibalism is implicit in the dialogical and dialectical relations established between a Latin American anti-tradition and a European tradition, it is particularly explicit in Brazil, where the barbarous cannibal was most notably and notoriously *under* development as the emblematic figure of an alternative identity-as-alterity. After *modernismo*, a utopian *antropofagia* returns in the (neo) avant-garde movements of *concretismo* and *tropicalismo*, which would herald the emergence of a “new poetry” and a “new cinema” in the New World. Both the re-cannibalization of a poetics performed by *poesia concreta* and the aesthetics of hunger illustrated by *cinema novo* arose in another, different socio-historical context, in which the question of capitalism *versus* socialism was underwritten by the problem of modernity-cum-coloniality. In dialogue with the contemporary discourses of post-structuralism and post-colonialism, a post-modernist cannibal logic would therefore involve both a deconstruction of logocentrism and a decolonization of Eurocentrism via the transformations of new forms of language and/or modes of writing, as evident in both the new poetry and the new cinema of the new barbarians of a new civilization.

¹ *The History of Herodotus*, Book 1, trans. George Rawlinson, <http://classics.mit.edu/Herodotus/history.mb.txt>.

² *Webster's II new college dictionary*. 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 173.

³ Philip B. Boucher, *Cannibal Encounters: Europeans and Island Caribs, 1492-1763*, quoted in Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 68-69.

⁴ Quoted in Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 49.

⁵ See: Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 49.

⁶ Quoted in Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 71.

⁷ Quoted in Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 74.

⁸ Quoted in Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 75.

⁹ Carlos Jáuregui, *Canibália: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2008), 73.

¹⁰ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 73.

¹¹ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 74.

¹² Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 75.

¹³ Quoted in Michael Palencia-Roth, "Enemies of God: Monsters and the Theology of Conquest," in *Monsters, Tricksters, and Sacred Cows: Animal Tales and American Identities*, ed. Albert James Arnold (University Press of Virginia, 1996), 40.

¹⁴ See: Jan van der Straat (Stradanus), *Nova Reperta* (1584), in *European Cultural Heritage Online* (ECHO), accessed July 9, 2012, http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/ECHOdocuViewfull?url=/mpiwg/online/permanent/einstein_exhibition/sources/PZ39PA1P/pageimg&viewMode=images&pn=2&mode=imagepath

¹⁵ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 59.

¹⁶ See: Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 56.

¹⁷ See: Theodore de Bry, *Les Grands Voyages* (Great Voyages – 1593).

¹⁸ Hans Staden, *The True History of his Captivity* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 144.

¹⁹ Staden, *True History*, 149-150.

²⁰ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 112.

²¹ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 112.

²² See: “Renaissance Exploration, Travel, and the World Outside Europe: Texts and Contexts: Jean de Léry, *from History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil (1578)*,” *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Norton Topics Online*, accessed July 9, 2012, http://www.wnorton.com/college/english/nael/16century/topic_2/delery.htm.

²³ Jean de Léry, *History of a voyage to the land of Brazil, otherwise called America*, trans. Janet Whatley (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 144.

²⁴ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 126.

²⁵ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 127.

²⁶ Léry, *History of a voyage*, 29.

²⁷ See: Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 110; 177.

²⁸ Quoted in Michel de Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” trans. E. J. Trechmann, in *World Masterpieces I*, ed. Maynard Mack (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1966), 1187.

²⁹ Michel de Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” trans. E. J. Trechmann, in *World Masterpieces I*, ed. Maynard Mack (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1966), 1187.

³⁰ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1187.

³¹ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1188.

³² Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1188.

³³ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1188.

³⁴ See: Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 70.

³⁵ Quoted in Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 70.

³⁶ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 70.

³⁷ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1191.

³⁸ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1192.

³⁹ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1191.

⁴⁰ Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” 1192.

⁴¹ See: Marc Foglia, “Michel de Montaigne”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2010 Edition)*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed July 9, 2012, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2010/entries/montaigne/>.

⁴² Montaigne, *Of Cannibals*, 1194.

⁴³ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/tempest/full.html>.

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- ⁴⁵ See: Roberto Fernández Retamar, *Caliban and other essays*, trans. Edward Baker (Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 11.
- ⁴⁶ Shakespeare, *The Tempest*.
- ⁴⁷ See: Michael O'Toole, "Shakespeare's Natives: Ariel and Caliban in *The Tempest*," accessed July 9, 2012, <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/lithum/gallo/tempest.html>.
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- ⁵⁰ John Dryden, *Almanzor and Almahide, or the Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards, a Tragedy*, Pt. 1, Act I, scene i, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15349/15349-h/15349-h.htm>.
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- ⁵⁵ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*.
- ⁵⁶ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*.
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- ⁶⁰ Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality Among Men*.
- ⁶¹ Jáuregui, *Canibália*, 225.
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- ⁹⁹ Rubén Darío, “Marinetti y el futurismo,” *La Nación* (Buenos Aires), April 5, 1909; See also: João Cezar de Castro Rocha, “‘Future’s Past:’ On the Reception of Futurism in Brazil,” in *International futurism in arts and literature*, ed. Günter Berghaus (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 209.
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- ¹⁴⁵ Huelsenbeck, "En Avant Dada," 467.
- ¹⁴⁶ Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," in *Dadas on Art*, ed. Lucy Lippard (New York: Dover Publications, 2007).
- ¹⁴⁷ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 14-15.
- ¹⁴⁸ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 15.
- ¹⁴⁹ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 16.
- ¹⁵⁰ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 15.
- ¹⁵¹ Jean Arp, "Dadaland," in *Dadas on Art*, ed. Lucy Lippard (New York: Dover Publications, 2007), 27.
- ¹⁵² Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 15.
- ¹⁵³ See: Steve McCaffery, "Cacophony, Abstraction, and Potentiality: The Fate of the Dada Sound Poem," in *The Sound of Poetry, the Poetry of Sound*, ed. Marjorie Perloff and Craig Dworkin (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009); See also: Johanna Drucker, *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909-1923* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 196.
- ¹⁵⁴ Huelsenbeck, "En Avant Dada," 468.
- ¹⁵⁵ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 19.
- ¹⁵⁶ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 19.

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- ¹⁵⁷ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 19.
- ¹⁵⁸ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 19.
- ¹⁵⁹ Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," 20.
- ¹⁶⁰ Francis Picabia, "Manifeste cannibale dans l'obscurité," http://melusine.univ-paris3.fr/Dada-revue/Dada_7_Revue.htm.
- ¹⁶¹ André Breton, "For Dada," trans. Mark Polizzotti, in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 491.
- ¹⁶² André Breton, "(The Mediums Enter," trans. Mark Polizzotti, in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 743.
- ¹⁶³ André Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," trans. R. Seaver and H. R. Lane, in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 721.
- ¹⁶⁴ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 727.
- ¹⁶⁵ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 728.
- ¹⁶⁶ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 728.
- ¹⁶⁷ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 730.
- ¹⁶⁸ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 723.
- ¹⁶⁹ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 728.
- ¹⁷⁰ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 729.
- ¹⁷¹ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 729.
- ¹⁷² Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 726.
- ¹⁷³ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 735.
- ¹⁷⁴ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 735.
- ¹⁷⁵ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 735.
- ¹⁷⁶ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 735.
- ¹⁷⁷ Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," trans. Edmund Jephcott, in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 1088.
- ¹⁷⁸ André Breton, *Nadja*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 69.
- ¹⁷⁹ Breton, *Nadja*, 69.
- ¹⁸⁰ Breton, *Nadja*, 142-143.

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- ¹⁸¹ Breton, *Nadja*, 142-143.
- ¹⁸² Benjamin, "Surrealism," 1089.
- ¹⁸³ Benjamin, "Surrealism," 1094.
- ¹⁸⁴ Breton, *Nadja*, 129.
- ¹⁸⁵ Breton, *Nadja*, 122 ; 129.
- ¹⁸⁶ See: Hal Foster, "The Artist as Ethnographer?" *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA, USA: The MIT Press, 1996).
- ¹⁸⁷ Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," 62-63.
- ¹⁸⁸ Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," 62-63.
- ¹⁸⁹ Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," 63.
- ¹⁹⁰ Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," 60.
- ¹⁹¹ Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," 60.
- ¹⁹² Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," 62.
- ¹⁹³ Bosi, *História concisa da literatura brasileira*, 340.
- ¹⁹⁴ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City*, 14.
- ¹⁹⁵ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City*, 14.
- ¹⁹⁶ Boccioni, "Futurist Painting and Sculpture," 176.
- ¹⁹⁷ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City*, 5.
- ¹⁹⁸ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City*, 16.
- ¹⁹⁹ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City*, 17.
- ²⁰⁰ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City*, 18.
- ²⁰¹ Benedito Nunes, "A antropofagia ao alcance de todos," in *A utopia antropofágica*, by Oswald de Andrade (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1990), 10.
- ²⁰² Nunes, "A antropofagia ao alcance de todos," 10.
- ²⁰³ Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto da poesia do Pau-Brasil," <http://antropofagia.uol.com.br/manifestos/poesia-pau-brasil/>.
- ²⁰⁴ Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto da poesia do Pau-Brasil."
- ²⁰⁵ Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto da poesia do Pau-Brasil."
- ²⁰⁶ Nunes, "A antropofagia ao alcance de todos," 13.

²⁰⁷ Oswald de Andrade, “Manifesto da poesia do Pau-Brasil.”

²⁰⁸ “Manifesto Nhegaçu Verde Amarelo da Escola da ANTA,” *Correio Paulistano*, 17 de maio de 1929, http://www.pco.org.br/conoticias/ler_materia.php?mat=8291.

²⁰⁹ “Manifesto Nhegaçu Verde Amarelo da Escola da ANTA.”

²¹⁰ Tarsila do Amaral, “Pintura Pau-Brasil e Antropofagia,” in *Revista Anual do Salão do Maio* (São Paulo: 1939).

²¹¹ Amaral, “Pintura Pau-Brasil e Antropofagia.”

²¹² Antônio Cândido and J. Aderaldo Castello, *Presença da literatura brasileira (História e Antologia). Vol. 3: Modernismo* (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1964), 16-17.

²¹³ Nunes, “A antropofagia ao alcance de todos,” 15.

²¹⁴ Nunes, “A antropofagia ao alcance de todos,” 15.

²¹⁵ Antonio Cândido, *Literatura e Cultura de 1900 a 1945: panorama para estrangeiro* (São Paulo: Nacional, 1965), 144-145.

²¹⁶ Oswald de Andrade, “Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto,” trans. Maria do Carmo Zanini (2006), <http://www.sibila.com.br/index.php/sibila-english/395-anthropophagic-manifesto>.

²¹⁷ Oswald de Andrade, “Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto.”

²¹⁸ Oswald de Andrade, “Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto.”

²¹⁹ Oswald de Andrade, “Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto.”

²²⁰ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans. Abraham Arden Brill (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1918), 234.

“One day the expelled brothers joined forces, slew and ate the father, and thus put an end to the father horde. Together they dared and accomplished what would have remained impossible for them singly. Perhaps some advance in culture, like the use of a new weapon, had given them the feeling of superiority. Of course these cannibalistic savages ate their victim. This violent primal father had surely been the envied and feared model for each of the brothers. Now they accomplished their identification with him by devouring him and each acquired a part of his strength. The totem feast, which is perhaps mankind’s first celebration, would be the repetition and commemoration of this memorable, criminal act with which so many things began, social organization, moral restrictions and religion.”

²²¹ Nunes, “A antropofagia ao alcance de todos,” 18.

²²² Augusto de Campos, “Revistas Re-Vistas: Os Antropófagos,” <http://antropofagia.uol.com.br/bibliotequinha/ensaios/revistas-re-vistas-os-antropofagos/>.

²²³ Augusto de Campos, “Revistas Re-Vistas: Os Antropófagos.”

²²⁴ Massaud Moises, *História da literatura brasileira: Modernismo* (São Paulo: Editora Cultrix, 1984), 34.

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- ²²⁵ Oswald de Andrade, *A utopia antropofágica* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1990), 101; 103.
- ²²⁶ Oswald de Andrade, *A utopia antropofágica*, 163.
- ²²⁷ Oswald de Andrade, *A utopia antropofágica*, 204; 209.
- ²²⁸ Oswald de Andrade, *A utopia antropofágica*, 202.
- ²²⁹ Octavio Paz, *Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avant-Garde*, trans. Rachel Phillips (Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 147.
- ²³⁰ Paz, *Children of the Mire*, 148.
- ²³¹ Octavio Paz, *Alternating Current*, trans. Helen R. Lane (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), 17.
- ²³² Paz, *Alternating Current*, 18-19.
- ²³³ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 21.
- ²³⁴ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 21.
- ²³⁵ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 26-27.
- ²³⁶ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 31.
- ²³⁷ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 31-32.
- ²³⁸ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 32.
- ²³⁹ Paz, *Alternating Current*, 33.
- ²⁴⁰ Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 57.
- ²⁴¹ Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 57.
- ²⁴² Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 58.
- ²⁴³ Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 59.
- ²⁴⁴ Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 61.
- ²⁴⁵ Hal Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" *October* 70 (1994), 5, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/779051>.
- ²⁴⁶ See: Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?," in *Twentieth century literary theory: an introductory anthology*, ed. Vassilis Lambropoulos and David Neal Miller (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1987).
- ²⁴⁷ Foucault, "What is an Author?," 137.
- "The phrase, 'return to,' designates a movement with its proper specificity, which characterizes the initiation of a discursive practice. If we return, it is because of a basic and constructive omission, an omission that is not the

result of accident or incomprehension. In effect, the act of initiation is such, in its essence, that it is inevitably subjected to its own distortions; that which displays this act and derives from it is, at the same time, the root of its divergences and travesties. This nonaccidental omission must be regulated by precise operations that can be situated, analysed, and reduced in a return to the act of initiation. The barrier imposed by omission was not added from the outside; it arises from the discursive practice in question, which gives it its law. Both the cause of the barrier and the means for its removal, this omission – also responsible for the obstacles that prevent returning to the act of initiation – can only be resolved by a return. In addition, it is always a return to a text in itself, specifically, to a primary and unadorned text with particular attention to those things registered in the interstices of the text, its gaps and absences [...] It follows naturally that this return [...] constantly introduces modifications that would come to fix itself upon the primary discursivity and redouble it in the form of an ornament which, after all, is not essential. Rather, it is an effective and necessary means of transforming discursive practice.”

²⁴⁸ Foster, “Neo-Avant-Garde,” 6.

²⁴⁹ Foster, “Neo-Avant-Garde,” 6.

²⁵⁰ Foster, “Neo-Avant-Garde,” 7.

²⁵¹ Foster, “Neo-Avant-Garde,” 16.

²⁵² Foster, “Neo-Avant-Garde,” 30.

²⁵³ Foster, “Neo-Avant-Garde,” 31.

²⁵⁴ Gonzalo Moises Aguilar, *Poesia concreta brasileira: as vanguardas na encruzilhada modernista* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2005.), 63-64.

²⁵⁵ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 47.

²⁵⁶ Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (New York: Verso, 1998), 162; 175.

²⁵⁷ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 48.

²⁵⁸ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 49-50.

²⁵⁹ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 44.

²⁶⁰ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 44.

²⁶¹ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 44.

²⁶² Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 43-44; 54.

²⁶³ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 55.

²⁶⁴ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy,” 57.

CHAPTER 2

NEW POETRY

“Today, or at least without presuming anything about the future which will follow from this, nothing or almost an art.”

– Stéphane Mallarmé

“Today space moves, sits up, and becomes rhythmic. Thus [...]space is different, more vast and, above all, in dispersion. To space in movement, word in rotation; to plural space, a new phrase that will be like a verbal delta, like a world that explodes in mid sky. Word on its own, through inner and outer spaces: nebula contained in a pulsation, blinking of a sun.”

– Octavio Paz

There are the lovers, embodied in the words that form a constellation in the blank space(s) of the page. Out of the silence a colorful melody arises, the sounds of alternating voices enacting an amorous ritual. The interaction is simultaneously verbal, vocal, and visual: the blue and orange colors intermingle, the masculine and feminine voices interpenetrate, the letters and words are interspersed. Meanwhile, the otherwise abstract pattern represents a man and woman engaged in a sexual act. Such a synaesthetic interplay constitutes a form of tone-color-poem, the equivalent of a “tone-color-melody,” a composition in which a single melody is distributed among various instruments, significantly altering its tone (or color) as it passes from one to the other. But in this erotic duet the instruments are elements of language, while the melody is the poem itself and its theme,

which has effectively been dislocated, or displaced, both in time and in space. The idea (or signification) that organizes the intersemiotic constellation emerges only in the intercourse in the interrelations between (linguistic) bodies, and is therefore situated in the interstices of this poetic assemblage of writing. As such, the line (of verse) has become a multiplicity, a number (or series) of fragmented lyrical voices minus the unifying, ego-centric discourse of the poet as subject. In this ex-centric, non-linear, and non-discursive poetry, the possibilities are open for multiple readings, multiple meanings, and chance encounters with the multivocal word as object. The (non)lyrical poem essentially describes the “dialectics” of making love, the ecstatic moment of procreation, and the enigmatic conception of an *other* creature. There is *ekstasis*: being outside of oneself. There is *otherness*: the *difference* of a beyond within, a (non) *space-in-between*. There are also echoes of the “The Exstasie,” as the conjunction of metaphysical poetry and vanguard music bears a barbarous, neo-baroque offspring.¹ The taboo has become totem, love has been transformed, through an anthropophagic transfiguration. Ultimately, the union of the carnal and the spiritual is analogous to the identification of form and content: a communion of body-souls via a communication of word-things. As such, the primordial tension between language and the world is spatiotemporally explored by means of an ideographic synthesis of word, image, and sound, all of which converge in order to form a new poetry.

eis
 os
 amantes sem parentes
 senão
 os corpos
 irmãum gemeoutrem
 cima eu baixela
 e coraçambos
 d u p l a m p l i n f a n t u n o (s) e m p r e
 semen(t)em ventre
 estesse aquelele
 inhumanoutro

“eis os amantes” – Augusto de Campos (1953/1955)

there
 are
 man the woman
 bare
 bodies
 brohther sighster
 mehind sheneath
 each heartbeat
 d u p l a m p l i n f a n t a s t i c
 orga(ni)sm
 thathis therhere
 unhumanother

“lovers” – Augusto de Campos / Marco Alexandre de Oliveira

The poem “eis os amantes” (“here are the lovers”) is part of a series of compositions by Augusto de Campos titled *poetamenos* (“minus-poet”), which represents the first systematic realization of concrete poetry in Brazil and in Latin America.² It was, in fact, one of the earliest and most significant manifestations of what would become an international movement. A revolutionary *ars poetica* of both invention and intervention, concrete poetry marked the first instance of a vanguard movement that originated in Latin America without any European precedent. It arose, rather, as a form of transcultural dialogue with contemporary movements in concrete art and concrete/electronic music, as a response to developments in Modernism and the “historical” avant-garde, as a critical appropriation and original transformation of a tradition of “world literature,” as a deconstruction of “universal” codes of poetic language, and as ritual of (cultural) cannibalism whose main (dis)course presented (temperate) foreign ingredients intermixed with local (tropical) flavor. The result was a new form of poetry – barbarous, ex-centric, different, and *other* – born at the margins, exploring the limits, and traversing borders in order to reinscribe the word itself as (logo)graphic (de)sign.

This section traces the emergence and evolution of *poesia concreta* as a movement in synchrony with “concrete” developments in art and music. It begins by presenting the interrelations between concrete poetry and the concrete/electronic music of innovative composers such as Anton Webern, Pierre Schaeffer, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Pierre Boulez. It then presents the interrelations between concrete poetry and the concrete art of innovative artists such as Theo van Doesburg, Piet Mondrian, and Max Bill. Finally, it

presents the form(ul)ation of concrete poetry via the innovations of artists, poets, and critics such as Ernest Fenollosa, Wassily Kandinsky, Öyvind Fahlström, Eugen Gomringer, and the Noigandres group (Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, Haroldo de Campos), who would invent a “verbivocovisual” poetics based on the concept of the ideogram as outlined by Fenollosa and Sergei Eisenstein.

concrete music

In his introduction to the *poetamenos* series, Augusto de Campos writes that he was aspiring to compose a “Klangfarbenmelodie” (“tone-color-melody”) with words, where the instruments were phrases, words, syllables, and letters whose “timbres” would be defined by an “ideogrammic” theme graphically represented in color.³ His poetic series thus implicitly and explicitly establishes a dialogue with works by the vanguard Austrian composer Anton Webern, who had developed his compatriot Arnold Schoenberg’s dodecaphonic (or twelve-tone) technique into a more complex form of “serialism.” Dodecaphony, according to Schoenberg, constituted a form of “composition with twelve notes related only to each other.”⁴ Technically speaking, it describes a series of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale that is systematically arranged in order to place equal emphasis on each and every note. Here the interrelations between notes are fundamental, and as a result of such a process music was, in a sense, approximated to the arts of painting, sculpture, and even writing due to its use of color, space, and syntax.⁵ Serialism evolved with the tone-color melody of Webern, whose method consisted of the fragmentation of melody from one to several instruments in order to produce multiple timbres. Augusto de Campos’ *poetamenos* series, in effect, dialogues with

serial music by means of an analogous technique that is apparent in “eis os amantes” and other poems such as “Lygia,” whose structure essentially constitutes a poetic translation, or “transposition,” of the opening measures of Webern’s *Quartet for Violin, Clarinet, Tenor saxophone and Piano, Op. 22* (1930).⁶ As Haroldo de Campos observes:

Assim como em Webern uma melodia contínua se desloca de instrumento para instrumento, mudando constantemente de cor (timbre), nesses poemas cada cor indica um tema diverso, a ser escandido por um timbre vocal diferente, o todo formando um ideograma lírico (os poemas eram, quase todos, de temática lírico-amorosa, dentro de uma nova concepção de lirismo, não discursivo-sentimental mas, por assim dizer, pontilhista-existencial).⁷

For Haroldo de Campos, Webern’s serialism is transcribed in Augusto de Campos’ *poetamenos* series as a form of a “lyrical ideogram.” Such a “new conception of lyricism” is said to demonstrate structural affinities with “pointillism” (or “punctualism”), a more radical form of serialism in which a series of individual points (or “particles”) of sound, spaced at intervals, are interrelated in order to produce a multiplicity. In “punctual” music elements are played off and against one another, both simultaneously and successively, in a point-counterpoint relation, the “punctuality” of sound being attained via “the intersection of various functional possibilities in a given point.”⁸ Also referred to as “star music,” punctualism ultimately constitutes a form of musical constellation that was developed by two notable followers of Webern, the German Karlheinz Stockhausen and the French Pierre Boulez, whose abstract compositions have been classified as “concrete” and/or “electronic” music.

The first experiments in *musique concrète* were produced in *Cinq études de bruits* (*Five Studies of Noises* – 1948) by the French composer Pierre Schaeffer, who soon afterwards founded the Groupe de Recherche de Musique Concrète. Related to the avant-garde techniques of collage, montage, and bruitism (“noise music”), concrete music utilizes

recorded natural and/or man-made sounds as material elements of a composition.⁹ The assemblage of concrete “sound objects” is therefore contrasted from the transcription of abstract musical notation. According to Schaeffer:

Lorsqu’en 1948, j’ai proposé le terme de “musique concrète”, j’entendais par cet adjectif, marquer une *inversion* dans le sens du travail musical. Au lieu de noter des idées musicales par les symboles du solfège, et de confier leur réalisation concrète à des instruments connus, il s’agissait de recueillir le concret sonore, d’où qu’il vienne, et d’en abstraire les valeurs musicales qu’il contenait en puissance.¹⁰

Early “studies” in concrete music included Boulez’s *Étude I* and *II* (1951) and Stockhausen’s *Konkrete Etüde* (1952), serial works that were affiliated with the movement. With the development of “total” or “integral” serialism, the significance of concrete and/or electronic music would be the multiplication of possibilities for the composition of sounds and the realization of an (aleatory) “openness” due to the eventual incorporation of (controlled) chance and other means of indeterminacy. In addition to presenting compositions that were principally – and in principle – preoccupied with form or structure, serialism as a whole was furthermore marked by an extensive exploration of (relational) syntax, as well as of the relations between sound and silence in music, an area of research that was also relevant to modernist poetry. Boulez himself describes the “tension” between sound and silence by comparing the composer Webern and the French Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé:

It is one of the hardest truths to demonstrate that music is not simply “the art of sounds,” but is better defined as a counterpoint between sound and silence. Webern’s sole, but also unique, innovation in the rhythmic field: this conception which links sound to silence in a relation so precise as to exhaust the power of auditory perception. Musical tension is enriched by a genuine respiration, comparable only to that which Mallarmé brought to poetry.¹¹

In a moment’s breath there is a movement’s breadth. In other words, only in the intervals of silence does sound have both a time and a space to become music. Such a blank and/or

empty space, full of possibility, can ultimately form an integral part of a composition, as in the poetry of Mallarmé. In the end, Webern's relation to Mallarmé exemplifies the relative or (s)elective affinities between a "concrete" music and poetry based on the techniques of serialism.

It is well documented that both Boulez and Augusto de Campos were greatly inspired by Mallarmé's pioneering work, especially the poetic constellation *Un coup de dés* (1897), whose main (subdivided) theme – "UN COUP DE DÉS JAMAIS N'ABOLIRA LE HASARD" ("A THROW OF THE DICE WILL NEVER ABOLISH CHANCE") – alludes to the problem of controlled chance. The (fragmented) structure of the poem itself reflects an exploration of both the substantive quality of space and the substantial tension between sound and silence. Indeed, the intimate interrelations between music and poetry in Mallarmé's *oeuvre* are perhaps what motivated Boulez to compose his own musical pieces based on the poet's texts. According to Haroldo de Campos, Boulez himself admitted that both *Improvisations sur Mallarmé* (1958) and *Pli selon pli* (*Portrait de Mallarmé* – 1957-1962) were actually steps toward undertaking the more complex project (or "task") of musically recreating *Un coup de dés*.¹² Boulez's interest in modernist writing also extended to more contemporary manifestations, as he (co)incidentally became interested in Brazilian concrete poetry precisely due to its utilization of colors to indicate various themes and multiple readings.¹³ Boulez, in fact, employed different colors in the score of his own *Troisième Sonate* (1957) in order to highlight alternative possibilities for eventual performances.¹⁴ Such a method of composition likely resulted from his contact with the concrete poets, and in particular the *poetamenos* series. As Campos notes:

A matriz aberta desses poemas permitia vários percursos de leitura, na vertical ou na horizontal, isolando e destacando blocos, ou já os integrando,



7

Pli selon pli (Portrait de Mallarmé)

No 3: Improvisation II «Une dentelle s'abolit»

pour soprano et neuf instrumentistes (1957)

Pierre Boulez
(*1925)

Andante - Alla breve

$\text{♩} = 66 - 83$

Harpe

Clavier

Vib. *)
vibrato
normal

Piano

2 Maracas
hauteur
signal

les petites notes
rapides

2 2

3 4

*) Le Vibraphone change de hauteur suivant le caractère, le tempo, le dynamisme.

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Pli selon pli (Portrait de Mallarmé) – Pierre Boulez (1957-1962)

alternativamente, com outras partes componentes da peça, através de relações de semelhança ou proximidade.¹⁵

Here the question is not only one of interrelations, of an “integral” composition, of a whole integrated by a serial organization of parts, but also one of “openness,” of an “open” work of art, of a unity constituted by a multiplicity of possibilities. Both in musical and poetic serialism, such complex problems are explored in parallel structural developments that nonetheless intersect by means of a *constructive* dialogue in which the new poetry responds to the new music, and *vice versa*. Accordingly, Haroldo de Campos describes such relations by drawing analogies between concrete/electronic music and concrete poetry:

Quando Stockhausen (um dos mais importantes compositores de música concreto-eletrônica) escreve que, pela primeira vez, uma peça musical está em vias de ser organizada de modo total e sinteticamente serial, a partir do próprio material [...] aborda um problema que, “mutatis mutandis”, se situa como hipótese de trabalho na poesia concreta: trata-se de organizar de maneira “sintético-ideogrâmica” ao invés de “analítico-discursiva” [...] a totalidade do poema: todos os seus elementos, todo o *material* em jogo a que já nos referimos, severamente disciplinados por uma vontade lúcida de estrutura.¹⁶

The (total) serialism envisaged by composer-theorists, such as Stockhausen and Boulez, and by poet-critics, such as Augusto de Campos and Haroldo de Campos, represents a “problem” that, “mutatis mutandis,” would also concern contemporary developments in concrete art, which is both nominally and technically related to concrete poetry.

concrete art

In a sense, the acoustic abstraction inherent in the serialism of concrete/electronic music has significant parallels in the visual abstraction present in serial compositions that characterize concrete art, which, not by chance, emerged around the same time period, and as

part of the same cultural milieu, as Schoenberg's and Webern's modernist innovations. Although the diverse origins of the movement include the abstract geometric works of Russian painter Kazimir Malevich (Suprematism), Dutch painter Piet Mondrian (Neo-Plasticism), and German painter Wassily Kandinsky (Bauhaus), the actual term *concrete art* derives from a manifesto by De Stijl founder Theo van Doesburg. "The Basis of Concrete Art" (1930) accordingly – and rather paradoxically – defined concrete art in contrast to abstract art: the former is said to relate to the mind, whereas the latter is said to relate to nature. In other words, concrete art refers to forms of mental or spiritual objects, while abstract art refers to forms of natural or material objects. Concrete art was thus conceived as an aesthetic manifestation that was autonomous and/or independent of the world of things. As van Doesburg writes in the manifesto:

The painting should be constructed entirely from purely plastic elements, that is to say planes and colours. A pictorial element has no other significance than itself and consequently the painting possesses no other significance than itself.¹⁷

In principle and in practice, then, concrete art is not based on any observable reality, nor does it aspire to have any symbolic implications. Its elements are quite simply color and the line or plane. The abstract is thereby depicted as concrete, and the ideal is described as real.

Van Doesburg's conception of concrete art owes much to works produced as part of the De Stijl ("The Style") movement, whose principal members included Mondrian. As such, Neo-Plasticism provided both a rational theoretical foundation and a viable aesthetic technique for the "style" to evolve. In this geometric style of painting, forms and shapes are reduced to a "grammar" of (vertical and horizontal) lines and angles, while the use of primary colors such as red, yellow, and blue is predominant, along with neutral or achromatic (non) colors such as black and white. But in the "neo-plastic" style the abstract relations

between elements are essentially symbolic, being derived from a spiritual, almost mystical, view of the ideal unity of the universe. As such, vertical lines represent an active principle and horizontal lines a passive principle, while colors express particular emotions. The correspondence with the real world is therefore analogical, as the art forms reflect the forces of nature and the human psyche, which despite the apparent tension and opposition are perceived to exist in harmony. In his own artistic and spiritual quest for balance, Mondrian himself strived to resolve the problem of creating a form of “dynamic equilibrium,” or movement, in otherwise static compositions:

It is important to discern two types of equilibrium in art – (1) Static balance (2) Dynamic equilibrium ... The great struggle for artists is the annihilation of static equilibrium in their paintings through continuous oppositions (contrasts) ... Many appreciate in my former work just the quality which I did not want to express, but which was produced by an incapacity to express what I intended to express – dynamic movement in equilibrium.¹⁸

Unlike natural or apparent movement (or motion), a dynamism that had been explored in Futurism, “dynamic movement” is entirely structural or latent and is by no means imitative or “physiognomic;” in other words, the movement is virtual and not real *per se*. Kinetic without being mimetic, structural movement is effectively realized by means of the tension between materials, of the relations between elements set in opposition or contrast. It is the balance or equilibrium established by such interrelations that generates the idea of movement, however real or concrete the otherwise ideal and abstract relations may be.

The problem of dynamic movement was absolutely fundamental in the development of concretism.¹⁹ It would be for art what the problem of chance or indeterminacy would be for music. As Haroldo de Campos observes:

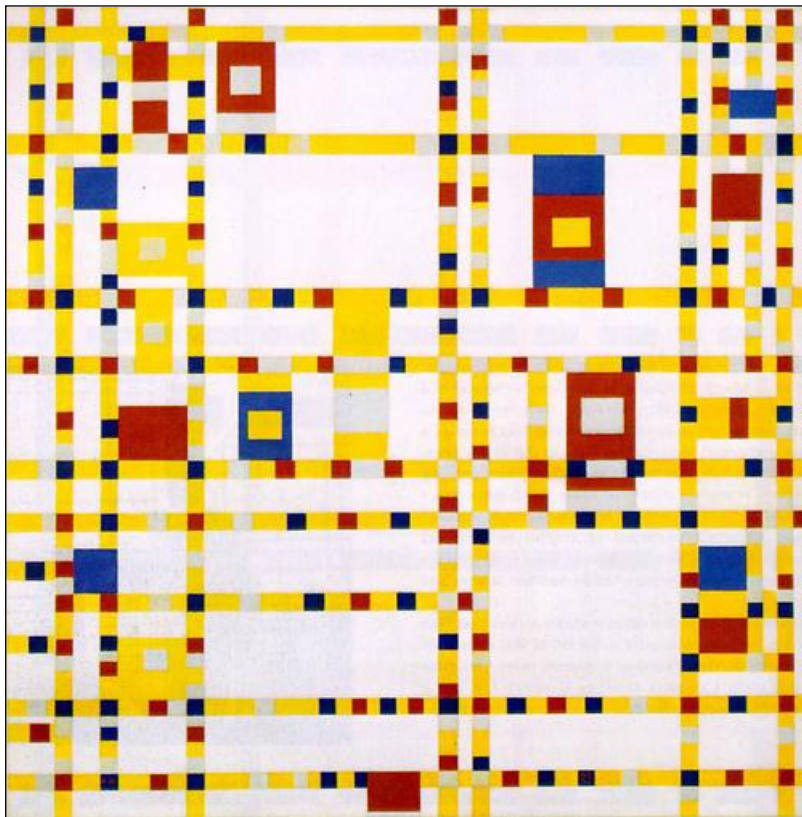
Por outro lado, uma das principais características da pintura concreta é a sua preocupação com o movimento, superando, qualitativamente, nesse sentido, a tendência rigorosamente estatizante de um Mondrian. Não se trata, porém, da

figuração do movimento, da pintura da velocidade [...] mas o movimento resultante visualmente do impacto de relações no quadro, criando um “tempo” próprio no âmbito de uma arte – a pintura – definida como espacial (aliás, o próprio Mondrian, na série “boogie woogie,” já se enquadraria nessa pesquisa).²⁰

According to Campos, then, the “static” balance of Mondrian was ultimately overcome and/or resolved by the “dynamic” equilibrium evident in the artist’s own *Broadway Boogie Woogie* series (1942 – 1943), an homage to the multiple sights and sounds of New York City. The series of compositions displays patterns of mostly red, yellow, and blue which are spaced at regular intervals in order to resemble the flashing lights and honking horns of traffic on city streets. It is interesting to note that such an example of serial art, which displays repetitions and variations on a theme, does not evoke the vanguard compositions of 12-tone serial music but instead refers to a popular style of 12-bar blues, which exhibits its own repetitions and variations on a theme. In boogie-woogie and in jazz in general, the celebrated technique of improvisation is also defined by a complex interplay of (random) order and (controlled) chance. What caught Mondrian’s eye – or ear – were the affinities between the “syncopated beat” of the music and the “dynamic rhythm” of his paintings, the former being a form of counterpoint, the latter being an effect of oppositions.²¹

Acknowledging its affiliation(s) with Mondrian in particular, and with concrete art in general, concrete poetry addresses the problem of “dynamic structure” as an “illustration” of the interrelations between space and time. As Décio Pignatari declares:

In concrete poetry [...] movement is no longer the mere illustration of a particular and real motion [...] The problem is now that of dynamic non-figurative structure itself, movement produced by and producing grapho-phonetic functions-relations informed by meaning and conferring on the space which separates and unites them a qualitative value, a relational spatial-temporal force, which is rhythm.²²



Broadway Boogie-Woogie – Piet Mondrian (1943)

Although Pignatari's statement refers primarily to concrete poems of the more advanced "geometric-mathematical" phase, already in the *poetamenos* series of the early "organic-phenomenological" phase such a spatiotemporal "rhythm" is evident, if only to an extent. For example, in "eis os amantes" the word-bodies that are initially separate become conjoined as the poem progresses, while the ecstatic moment of orgasm is (ideo)graphically represented by the spacing of the letters at regular intervals, which thereby creates a temporal effect. Meanwhile, in line with other "concrete" techniques in visual art, "eis os amantes" also employs an expressive use of color, though it is not symbolic by any means. Its symmetrical pattern is furthermore structured along horizontal and vertical axes that *graph* the multiplicity of possible readings. Ultimately, there is a correspondence between language and the world that is evident in the isomorphism between form and content, thereby revealing analogical relations between word and thing.

After its initial formulation, the principles of concrete art established by van Doesburg were subsequently developed by the Swiss artist Max Bill, who had earlier studied with Kandinsky and others at the Bauhaus. Bill later became part of the Zürcher Schule der Konkreten (Zurich School of Concrete Art) before finally founding the Ulm School of Design, which combined his apprenticeship at the Bauhaus with his experience in concrete art. Bill had organized the first international exhibition of concrete art and founded the review *Abstrakt/Konkret* (1944-1945), and by the 1960s concrete art had effectively become an international movement. In the concise manifesto "Concrete Art" (1936/1949), Bill re-defines and re-elaborates the principles of concretism in terms that recall the words of van Doesberg:

We call “Concrete Art” works of art which are created according to a technique and laws which are entirely appropriate to them, without taking external support from experiential nature or from its transformation, that is to say, without the intervention of a process of abstraction.²³

Accordingly, concrete art is once more described in contrast to abstract art, and as being “autonomous in its specificity.” Composed of color, space, light, and movement, concrete art relates such “instruments” in order to create a “new reality,” as abstract mental ideas become visible in concrete material form. Finally, concrete art is said to represent a synthesis of a series of contradictory principles such as life and art, the real and the ideal, the natural and the artificial, the universal and the individual:

Concrete Art, when it is true to itself, is the pure expression of harmonious measure and law. It organizes systems and gives life to these arrangements, through the means of art. It is real and intellectual, anaturalist while being close to nature. It tends toward the universal and yet it cultivates the unique, it rejects individuality, but for the benefit of the individual.²⁴

The “universal” tendencies of concrete art were, indeed, an important factor in its worldwide propagation, as concretism eventually evolved into a global phenomenon that spread from Europe to the Americas through various forms of constructive dialogue and personal contacts among artists. In Brazil, *concretismo* would officially be launched at the I Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta (1956), which exhibited works by both the Ruptura group of artists and the Noigandres group of poets. A concrete poetry, as such, would intermediate the interrelations between the movements and/or tendencies of concrete art and concrete/electronic music.

Although contemporary developments in art and music would constitute relatively distinct phenomena, there are indeed parallels between the serialism of concrete art and the serialism of concrete/electronic music.²⁵ In addition to the evident preoccupation with (non)objectivity and abstraction via geometric form and/or mathematical structure, the main

points of intersection include the formation of multiplicities and the formulation of serial interrelations by means of a structural dynamism. It has already been argued that, in a sense, the dynamism of serial art implicitly corresponds to the dynamism of serial music.²⁶ If in the former dynamism is the result of oppositions and contrast, in the latter dynamism is the result of the relations between parts (microstructure) and a whole (macrostructure). In both concrete art and concrete/electronic music, therefore, “dynamic” effects are created by means of multiple interrelations within an integrated system which effectively becomes an “open” work due to the (limitless) series of possibilities generated. The furthest limits or consequences of such developments are the virtual realization of movement on the one hand, and the eventual incorporation of (controlled) chance on the other. In sum, the temporal dimension – via motion or movement – of an otherwise spatial art (painting) can be perceived as analogous to the spatial dimension – via organization or syntax – of an otherwise temporal art (music). Such relative affinities were immediately – and rather astutely – perceived by the Brazilian concrete poets, who in the “pilot-plan for concrete poetry” re-write the analogy as such:

So in music – by, definition, a time art – space intervenes (Webern and his followers: Boulez and Stockhausen; concrete and electronic music); in visual arts – spatial, by definition – time intervenes (Mondrian and his Boogie-Woogie series; Max Bill; Albers and perceptive ambivalence; concrete art in general).²⁷

The series of “concrete” developments would necessarily have significant repercussions in related genres such as poetry, which has long inhabited an ambivalent space in between art and music. Poetry as a form of writing tends toward the visual, poetry as a form of performance tends toward the vocal, and poetry as a form of art tends toward the verbal. As a dialogical synthesis of the interrelated techniques of concrete art and concrete/electronic

music, the resolutely verbi-voco-visual *poetamenos* series thus marks the contemporaneous arrival of an intersemiotic concrete poetry on the international stage, though the (neo)vanguard movement would enter the scene through the proverbial back-door, from the marginal *space-in-between* of Latin America.

concrete poetry

The emergence of concrete poetry in Brazil was a rationally planned (ad)venture on the part of Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, and Décio Pignatari, the trio that would form the enigmatically named Noigandres group in order to consolidate and then propagate the new poetry. Formulated from the margins or periphery of Latin America as a poetic *constellation* in which various “points” of contact intersect, the revolutionary movement arose both as a response to European modernism and the “historical” avant-garde, and in correspondence with concretism and the neo-avant-garde. Concrete poetry was first articulated as “uma nova teoria de forma – uma organoforma – onde noções tradicionais como princípio-meio-fim, silogismo, verso tendem a desaparecer e ser superadas por uma organização poético-gestaltiana, poético-musical, poético-ideogrâmica da estrutura.”²⁸ Such a “new” theory of “organic” form was therefore based on contemporary developments in psychology (gestalt theory) and recent studies in linguistics (the ideogram) that had impacted modernist art, music, and poetry. Concrete poetry as such was said to constitute the latest development in the historical, or “critical,” evolution of forms.²⁹ Meanwhile, the actual term *poesia concreta* gained currency after the publication of “Poesia Concreta” (1955), an article-

manifesto by Augusto de Campos that contextualizes the movement and summarizes its principles:

In synchrony with the terminology adopted by the visual arts and, to a point, by vanguard music (concretism, concrete music), I would say that there is also a concrete poetry. Concrete in the sense that, leaving aside the figurative pretensions of expression (which is not to say occluding its meaning), the words in this new poetry behave as autonomous objects.³⁰

In the opening passage of the manifesto, the relations between concrete poetry, concrete art, and concrete music are presented in “concrete” terms. Despite its delayed appearance on the scene, concrete poetry is declared to be *in sync* with related developments in art and music in order to situate the tendency as belonging to a more comprehensive aesthetic and/or cultural mo(ve)ment. An example of post-war, post-modernist (neo) avant-gardism, concrete poetry proposed theoretical problems and practical solutions to questions posed by other genres. In forming a constructive dialogue with concrete art and music, for instance, concrete poetry explores the problem of *concreteness*, a problem that would have significant implications for poetic language and communication. Ultimately, language as such, old harbinger of an ideal message, would be turned into material for the construction of a new poetry. No longer would the word be an empty vehicle, a transparent medium, but rather it would once more bear the *name* that communicates the *thing* itself in all its (objective) being, including its connections with other things. Such is the *concrete* character of the new form of poetry, in which the medium (or structure) essentially composes the message (or content), a meaning that arises from the material and/or functional relations between word-things. According to Augusto de Campos, “the hallmark of the *concrete poem* is an irreversible and functional optical/sonorous structure that serves, one could say, to generate the idea, creating a wholly dynamic, ‘verbivocovisual’ entity [...] from ductile, mouldable, amalgamable words entirely

at the poem's disposal."³¹ Concrete poetry is thus fundamentally a "verbivocovisual" poetry, whose form (or design) draws its force of meaning from the dynamic interrelations of word, image, and sound, all of which function as material for a poetic construction of language, a constellation of signs.

The idea or concept of a "concrete" poetry, in fact, has multiple origins in modernist and/or avant-garde poetry and poetics. The first known usage of the term occurs in sinologist/orientalist Ernest Fenollosa's seminal, albeit much contested, "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" (1908/1918), a study which asks "in what sense can verse, written in terms of visible hieroglyphics, be reckoned true poetry?"³² Fenollosa ultimately lauds the metaphorical potency and potential of the ideogram, which magically appears to transform language into "a splendid flash of concrete poetry."³³ The "concrete force" of the ideogram is said to reside in its singular capacity to suggest essential relations between word and thing, language and the world, by means of a "vivid shorthand picture of the operations of nature."³⁴ According to Fenollosa, in traditional verse "there is no natural connection between thing and sign: all depends upon sheer convention."³⁵ The ideographic "method" of composition, however, exhibits a form of "natural suggestion."³⁶ For example, in the phrase "man sees horse:"

First stands the man on his two legs. Second, his eyes move through space: a bold figure represented by running legs under an eye, a modified picture of an eye, a modified picture of running legs but unforgettable once you have seen it. Third stands the horse on his four legs.

The thought picture is not only called up by these signs as well as by words but far more vividly and concretely. Legs belong to all three characters: they are *alive*.³⁷

By drawing, or transcribing, the abstract (inter)actions of things via the interrelations between "signs" and/or "words" that combine to form a "thought-picture," the ideographic

writing of these otherwise “visible hieroglyphics” approximates the art of poetry, itself characterized by “the concrete colors of its diction,” to the “concreteness” of nature and/or natural processes.³⁸

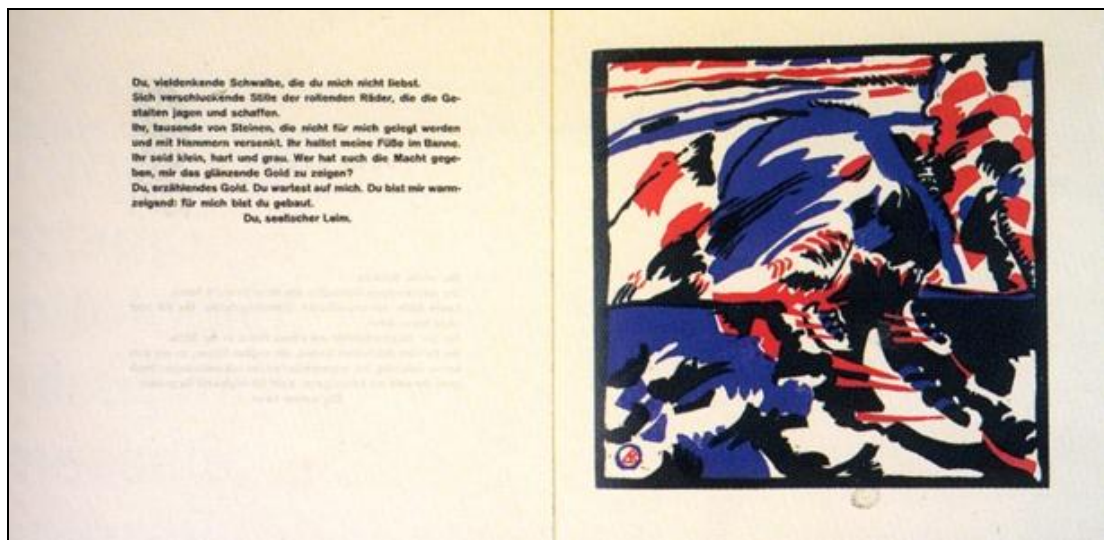
The relationship between the *concrete* and the *natural* is also evident in an illustrated artist’s book by Kandinsky that was composed during the formative period of his transition to abstract/concrete art. Exploring both the visual and the verbal, *Klänge* (*Sounds* – 1912) not only relates word and image but also differentiates between the “figurative” and the “abstract,” which Kandinsky problematically terms “concrete:”

In these woodcuts, as in the rest – woodcuts and poems – can be found traces of my development from the “figurative” to the “abstract” (the “concrete” according to my terminology – which is, in my opinion at least, more precise and more expressive than the usual).³⁹

The poems from *Klänge* are replete with natural imagery and an expressive use of (descriptive) color, which as the title suggests is related to musical tone. Such a synaesthesia of word, image, and sound is thereby exhibited in poems that display peculiar types of linguistic patterns and formal variations, as the words become material (or concrete) elements in an otherwise spiritual (or abstract) composition. In addition to the technique(s) of repetition and reiteration, there is also the invention of neologisms via a constructive method of verbal montage which, in a sense, creates a form of “word-ideogram.” For example, throughout the poems there frequently appear compound (or *portmanteau*) words such as “brownwhite” and “redblue” to describe color combinations, or “flatround” and “snowwhitehard” to depict other qualities. Such verbal constructions foreground the material dimensions of language, forming objective (or concrete) relations between words that in turn formulate conceptual (or abstract) relations between real things which are represented in the world of art. Referring to Kandinsky’s writing as a form of “konkrete Dichtung,” the Dadaist



Example from “The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry” – Ernest Fenollosa (1908/1918)



poem and woodcut from *Klänge* – Wassily Kandinsky (1912)

Hans (Jean) Arp later observes that such a “concrete poetry” has neither “sententious” nor “didactic” intentions:

A poem by Goethe teaches the reader, in a poetical way, that death and transformation are the inclusive condition of man. Kandinsky, on the contrary, places the reader before an image of dying and transforming words, before a series of dying and transforming words ...⁴⁰

To play on Kandinsky’s playful style, then, we might say that Kandinsky’s *forms* are thereby *formulated* by means of *formal transformations*, *formations* that therefore *form* a *form* apart, *formed* in part, for its part, by means of *formal information* from the world of *forms*. Incidentally, Arp’s commentary on Kandinsky’s concrete poetry would inspire Haroldo de Campos to reformulate the problem by composing the pattern poem “nascemorre” (“isborndies”), in which the word is born, dies, is born again, dies again, is unborn, undies, *etcetera* in a perpetual process of transformation, a rhythmic cycle of life and death, which is mirrored in the dynamic, geometric structure of the poem itself.

After such early, apparently (non)related and/or (co)incidental instances, the term *concrete poetry* reemerges in the “Manifesto for Concrete Poetry” (1953), written by the Brazilian-born, naturalized Swedish artist Öyvind Fahlström. Although this very first manifesto of concrete poetry, inspired by theories of serial and concrete music, had relatively insignificant repercussions for the development of the international movement, to its due credit and/or historical merit, the text does to an extent foresee and approach the problem of a “concrete poetry” in an insightful manner, especially with regard to its preoccupation with formal structure and its consideration of language as a material medium. As Fahlström asserts:

Poetry can be not only analyzed but also created as structure. Not only as structure emphasizing the expression of idea content but also as concrete structure [...] It is certain that words are symbols, but there is no reason why

se
 nasce
 morre nasce
 morre nasce morre
 renasce remorre renasce
 remorre renasce
 remorre
 re
 re
 desnasce
 desmorre desnasce
 desmorre desnasce desmorre
 nascemorrenasce
 morrenasce
 morre
 se

“nascemorre” – Haroldo de Campos (1958)

born
 dead born
 dead born dead
 reborn redead reborn
 redead reborn
 redead
 unborn
 undead unborn
 undead unborn undead
 borndeadborn
 deadborn
 dead

“borndead” – Haroldo de Campos / Marco Alexandre de Oliveira

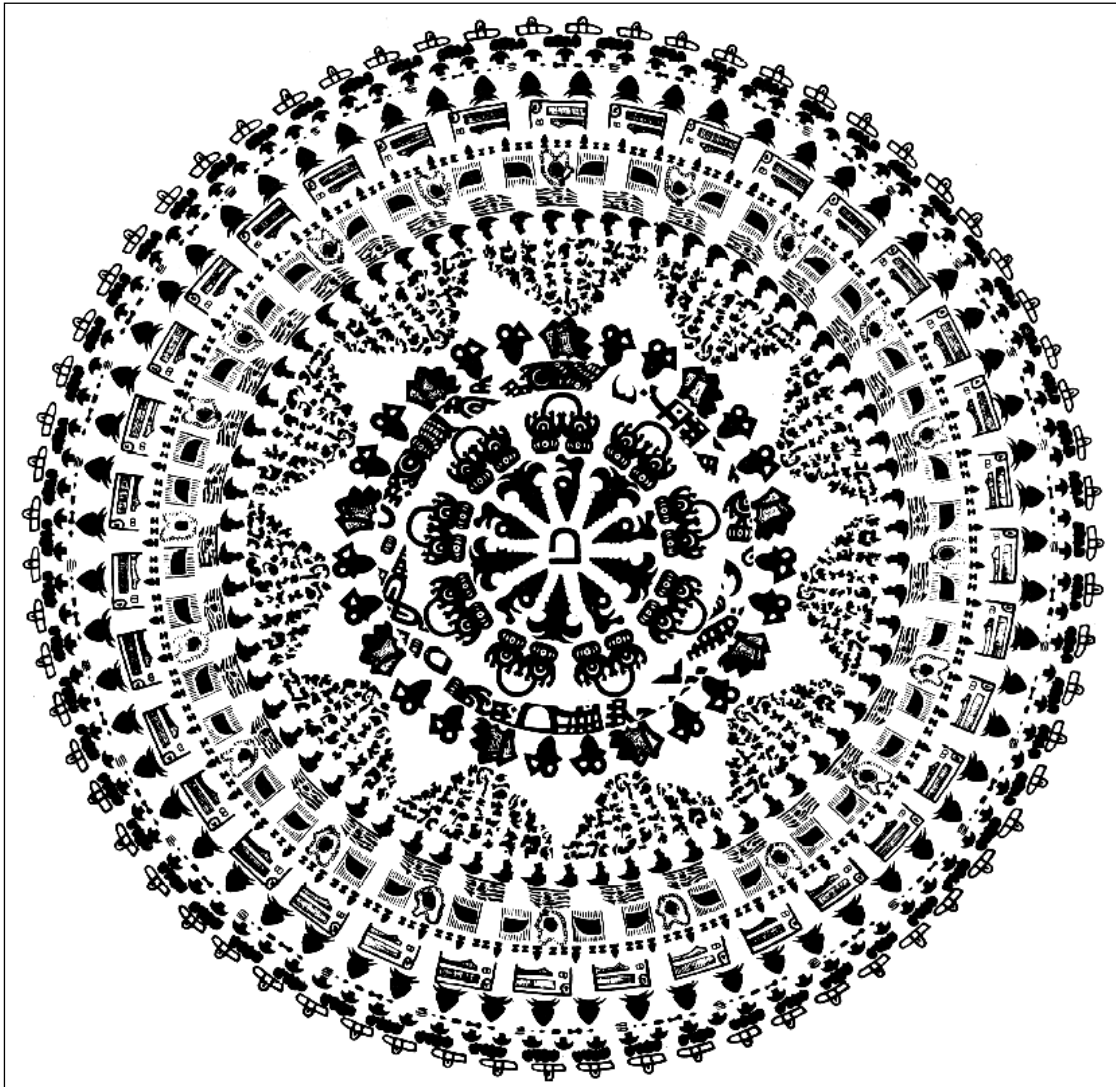
poetry couldn't be experienced and created on the basis of language as concrete material.⁴¹

In order to “structure” or organize language as material, Fahlström formed “tables” of words which, in a sense, correspond to the rows in serial (and concrete) music, though such a technique was not explored or developed by other concrete poets. Examples include “Bobbs inhägnad” (“Bob’s Fence”), which, according to critic Mary Ellen Solt, “makes use of ‘parallel’ and ‘framed-form’ strophes within which ‘motifs’ constructed of serial word patterns both repeat and reverse themselves to make a statement about the fenced-in condition of ordinary man.”⁴² Another work from *Bord-Dikter* (1952-55) “appears to present the concept of the poem as table metaphorically, for it resembles the ornate, round, brass tables associated with Eastern cultures, art objects of a kind, and also the mandala.”⁴³ Elsewhere in the manifesto, Fahlström actually arrives at a universally recognized *concrete* formula when he states that “it is best if form and content are one.”⁴⁴ There is, indeed, no form of concrete poetry that is not, at least in principle, based on this dictum. Meanwhile, other innovative possibilities for a concrete poetry include “the possibility for more readings corresponding to the free movement of sight when you look at abstract art. Thus the strophes can be read not only from left to right and from above to below but vice-versa and vertically [...] Mirroring, diagonal reading.”⁴⁵ As in both concrete art and concrete/electronic music, here the problem is, once more, one of an open work of art, in which multiplicities are generated by means of “diagonal” relations. In the manifesto Fahlström furthermore alludes to the related question of (spatial) rhythm, of “rhythms of word order, rhythms of space.” What the artist-poet proposes is to form “new agreements and contrasts” by means of a mode of analogical thinking, a “logic of likeness” that, applied to language, yields the formula: “w o r d s w h i c h s o u n d a l i k e b e l o n g t o g e t h e r.”⁴⁶

2. Bobbs inhägnad.

och		kommer
den		vi
tjockare		som
allt		satt
en påve		han
bäst		han
kom		var
Bobb		sittgruparna
och ett tåg tidigaste till sittgruparna	kommer kom dan blev till	Bobb sittgruparna till tidigaste tåg ett och
vi		kom
som	från Bobb	bäst
satt	fast han var	en påve
han	på samma gång	allt
han	mänsklig och	tjockare
var		den
kommer kom dan blev till Bobb	sittgruparna till tidigaste tåg ett och	Bobb till blev dan kom kommer
Bobb		sittgruparna
kom		var
bäst		han
en påve		han
allt		satt
tjockare		som
den		vi
och		kommer

“Bobbs inhägnad” – Öyvind Fahlström (1952-55)



“table” from *Bord-Dikter* – Öyvind Fahlström (1952-55)

Like Fenollosa, Fahlström (co)incidentally sought new ideas to “renew grammatical structures” through comparisons with other, “foreign” languages such as Chinese, in which meaning is “derived from word order.” Curiously enough, he also considered models for concrete poetry from the languages of “primitive” people and the mentally insane. If the former tends to think by analogy and “likeness,” the latter tends to perceive “resemblances” and “associations.” Such is the (Freudian) case of the schizophrenic, who likewise (mis)treats language as a concrete thing or object by “modeling with the material of words (neologisms).”⁴⁷

Fahlström himself remarks that his propositions concerning the construction of a concrete poetry relate more to concrete music than to concrete art. For the contemporary Swiss-Bolivian poet Eugen Gomringer, however, the opposite would in fact be the case. Apparently unaware of Fahlström’s manifesto, Gomringer undertook to “programmatically” create a “new type of poetry” that corresponded to recent developments in the visual arts, especially those of concrete art and graphic design.⁴⁸ The result of this process was *Konstellationen* (*Constellations* – 1953), an original and unique work that (co)incidentally was published at the same time that Augusto de Campos was composing his *poetamenos* series. This multilingual, polyglot series of “constellations” includes the poems “avenidas,” “silencio,” “ping pong,” and “wind,” all of which marked the genesis in Europe of what would eventually become recognized as concrete poetry. Such works constitute relatively simple patterned compositions, organized via a spatial syntax, that were designed for the rapid communication of poetic information or content. As in concrete art, the dynamic structure of the poems creates a force of rhythm (or movement) and a multiplicity of interrelations among material (non)verbal elements, such as letters, words, and even the

avenidas
avenidas y flores

flores
flores y mujeres

avenidas
avenidas y mujeres

avenidas y flores y mujeres y
un admirador

“avenidas” – Eugen Gomringer (1953)

avenues
avenues and flowers

flowers
flowers and women

avenues
avenues and women

avenues and flowers and woman and
an admirer

“avenues” – Eugen Gomringer / Marco Alexandre de Oliveira

silencio silencio silencio
 silencio silencio silencio
 silencio silencio silencio
 silencio silencio silencio
 silencio silencio silencio

“silencio” – Eugen Gomringer (1953)

ping pong
 ping pong ping
 pong ping pong
 ping pong

“ping pong” – Eugen Gomringer (1953)

w w
 d i
 n n n
 i d i d
 w w

“wind” – Eugen Gomringer (1953)

blank space of the page. According to Haroldo de Campos, Gomerlinger's poetry was "extremamente reduzida, de construção rigorosa e ortogonal, tematicamente circunscrita a anotações da natureza ou da paisagem urbana, ou, então, a motivos abstratos de dinâmica estrutural."⁴⁹ In addition to concision, geometry, mimetism, repetition, and abstraction, other significant factors present in the "constellations" include the element of play, which describes the type of interrelations among (linguistic) materials, and the technique of inversion, which opens the work to various multidirectional readings. Gomerlinger himself declares that such a form of (inter)play was his most important contribution to concrete poetry.⁵⁰ As such, in "avenidas" a street scene is recreated via a permutational form of substitution and addition; in "silencio" the silence is communicated via a blank space in the middle of a square pattern; in "ping pong" the back-and-forth table-tennis game is represented via a structural allusion produced by means of an alternating word order; while in "wind" the movement of a force of nature is mirrored via the spatial distribution, or dispersion, of the letters. In all of these poetic constellations, a restricted number of linguistic elements are playfully used as (non)verbal material in geometrical patterns and otherwise abstract compositions that nonetheless relate to the concrete, natural world.

Despite initially considering the term *concrete poetry*, Gomerlinger designated the *constellations* as such due to the influence of Mallarmé, whose *Un coup de dés* actually concludes with the image of a constellation that ultimately comes to represent a future redemption for both the poet and poetry itself. Thus considered in meta-poetic terms: if Mallarmé's constellation, both in form and in content, prefigured the form(ul)ation of a new poetry, then Gomerlinger's constellations figured as the realization of a poetic prophecy of sorts: the "line" (of verse) had become a constellation, a (graphic) design of signs. In order

to define his project, Gomringer elaborated his theories in manifestos such as “from line to constellation” (1954) and “Concrete Poetry” (1956), which were published after he became secretary to Max Bill at Ulm, where he had become exposed to the principles of concrete art. In “from line to constellation,” Gomringer begins by explaining the impulses for a “new poetry,” which would correspond to recent developments in language and/or writing:

Our languages are on the road to formal simplification, abbreviated, restricted forms of language are emerging [...] Restriction in the best sense – concentration and simplification – is the very essence of poetry [...] Headlines, slogans, groups of sounds and letters give rise to forms which could be models for a new poetry just waiting to be taken up for meaningful use.⁵¹

For Gomringer, the new media of informative *signs* presented certain formal characteristics, such as simplification, abbreviation, and restriction, which a “new poetry” should strive to incorporate, especially since such qualities were seen as essential to poetry as such. A significant feature of the new “forms of language” was not only the evidently visual character, but also the visible “use.” Accordingly, “the new poem is simple and can be perceived visually as a whole as well as in its parts. It becomes an object to be both seen and used: an object containing thought but made concrete through play-activity, its concern is with brevity and conciseness.”⁵² The “new poem” thus constituted a whole, integrated object made up of parts that were interrelated, a construction of linguistic materials with expressly “concrete” functions. Paradoxically, such functions were conceived as having an essentially spiritual and not actually material purpose, especially since the utility, or usefulness, of the “object” was derived from purely aesthetic and/or poetic qualities. Envisaging the ideal form for a new poetry, Gomringer thus declares that “the constellation is the simplest possible kind of configuration in poetry which has for its basic unit the word, it encloses a group of words as if it were drawing stars together to form a cluster.”⁵³ The constellation is furthermore

described as both an “arrangement” and a “play-area,” a game of sorts whose rules are inherently “fixed.” The “order” has been predetermined, the multiple “possibilities” prescribed, by the poet for the reader, who is invited to actively participate. Ultimately, the constellation forms an assemblage of word-signs drawn or inscribed upon a material surface, an object (or group of objects) “brought into the world,” or else, “a reality in itself and not a poem about something or other.”⁵⁴ The poems therefore do not refer to the world of things *per se*, but rather transcribe the reality of language as such.

In his second manifesto “Concrete Poetry,” Gomringer adopts and adapts his terminology in order to explicitly align his constellations with related developments in contemporary poetics that also tended to eschew more conventional forms. In remarking about “visible form,” Gomringer contrasts concrete poetry to “traditional” verse by comparing it with architecture:

Concrete language structures either do not follow the traditional verse and line order or they follow it in such a limited way that one is not reminded of traditional forms (this refers only to poetry) [...] the visible form of concrete poetry is identical to its structure, as is the case with architecture.⁵⁵

Once more, a fundamental problem for concrete poetry can be reduced to one of “form” or “structure.” Rather than merely express poetic sentiments and/or ideas, the implicit task becomes simply to communicate information via structure. As such, structure itself – the shape, the pattern, and/or the organization – must be seen as identical to content. According to Solt, the basic formula may thus be represented as: “form = content / content = form.”⁵⁶ The design also becomes a *sign*, the configuration a *figure* of language. Although individual words already and evidently communicate particular meanings, the form or structure of the poem as a whole is what ultimately constructs the interrelations between words, and therefore between concepts, which in turn generate the principal, overarching ideas that compose the

constellation. In order to effectively communicate meaning, information as “concrete language structure” should therefore be conveyed in a “concise unveiled form.”⁵⁷ Why?

Because the basis of good linguistic communication consists of analogous thought structure – or to use behaviorist terminology: analogous pattern structure – as well as of analogous material (sign) structure by way of the open visible presentation of a structure and often psychologically motivated reduction to relatively few signs (or signals).⁵⁸

In order to form concrete relations, then, concrete language functions by means of analogy: word to word, thing to thing, word to thing, etc. Rather than represent abstract ideas or concepts, the concrete poem presents concrete things or objects in the form of words or language, which in turn interact in multiple and meaningful ways. As Mallarmé once commented: “one does not make poetry with ideas, but with *words*.”⁵⁹ Or, as another source of inspiration for Gomringer, the “objectivist” poet William Carlos Williams, once wrote: “No ideas but in things.”⁶⁰ The interrelations between such word-things are both significant (in terms of signs) and substantial (in terms of substances), drawing from correspondences in form and content. Analogy, therefore, becomes a means of relating the word to the world in the simplest and most direct way possible, via the paradoxically *immediate* medium of concrete language. Consequently, the concrete poem displays an analogical structure, a (non)verbal design as a metaphor for a material reality. Ultimately (fore)seen as the product of a new world-view formulated by rational principles that favor synthetic modes of thought to analytic ways of thinking, concrete poetry as such promised to be(come) a model for the poetic communication of information:

Concrete poetry is founded upon the contemporary scientific-technical view of the world and will come into its own in the synthetic-rationalistic world of tomorrow. If concrete poetry is still considered strange (aesthetically meager or overly-simplified), this is probably due to a lack of insight into the new directions in which our society is developing in thought and action, which in essence contain a new total view of the world.⁶¹

Considering the “new directions” of society, which in effect displayed a “new total view of the world,” Gomringer thus advocated a “new type of poetry” in the form of a constellation, a “new poem” that dialogued with contemporary developments in the visual or *graphic* arts and in the human sciences, as well as in information and communications technologies. His eventual acceptance of the term *concrete poetry* also signaled another type of correspondence, however, both structural and personal. For it would occur “by chance,” from a “coincidental meeting,” according to Haroldo de Campos, that the “mutual discovery” of “shared elements” in the poetics of Gomringer and the Noigandres group would lead to the constructive dialogue that would in turn found an international movement from relatively distinct manifestations.⁶² Such a fortuitous contact, possibly preordained in the stars, was probably quite predictable given the actual or “concrete” circumstances. Reflecting upon the emergence of concrete poetry on two continents, Gomringer finally observes both the historical and existential “necessity” of the movement:

International-supranational. It is a significant characteristic of the existential necessity of concrete poetry that creations [...] began to appear almost simultaneously in Europe and South America and that the attitude which made the creation and defense of such structures possible manifested itself here as it did there.⁶³

Across the Atlantic, an *other* (neo) avant-garde movement would simultaneously originate in the New World, with its differences and repetitions. In *spite* of economic dependency, the *latest* cultural development in Latin America was by no means “underdeveloped.” On the contrary, Brazilian concrete poetry was arguably more advanced than its European counterpart due to its inherent complexity in both theory and praxis. According to Haroldo de Campos:

A poesia concreta brasileira – tal como representada na série “Poetamenos” e em alguns outros poemas então inéditos – era mais complexa, de construção não bidimensional (ortogonal) mas pluridimensional, menos concentrada, participando de um barroquismo visual que, pode-se dizer, constitui uma das constantes formais da sensibilidade brasileira [...].⁶⁴

Notwithstanding the partiality of Campos’ observations, the *poesia concreta* of the Noigandres poets was markedly different from Gomringer’s *constellations*. If the latter exhibited reductively (two-dimensional) verbal-visual designs, the former presented elaborately (three-dimensional) verbal-vocal-visual media. Although both share evident affinities with concrete art, relations to concrete/electronic music are virtually absent in Gomringer’s poetry. Furthermore, in addition to the definitive influences of contemporary graphic design, the Brazilian concrete poetry was also fundamentally rooted in a literary tradition with various historical antecedents, ranging from the Baroque and Romanticism to Modernism and the avant-garde. Nonetheless, the apparent coincidence (or simultaneity) of relatively distinct developments in contemporary poetry and/or poetics reveals a much more profound correspondence of vision and purpose that essentially underwrites any superficial difference(s). What therefore began as an implicitly structural affinity soon developed into an explicitly constructive exchange. The subsequent formation of concrete poetry as the international (neo)vanguard movement of the moment was thereby formulated by means of an actual, transcultural dialogue between Latin American and European poets and artists whose expressed aim was to produce a new (graphic) writing to synchronize with the new media, to create a new language to communicate new information, to construct a new poetry to convey a new world.

Under the sign of an *other* thinking, however, the innovative “new poetry” of the New World was also drawn from an older (or pre-modern) form of writing that was made

new (or modern): ideography. As the structural principle for these concrete assemblages of word-signs, the ideogram was for the Noigandres group what the constellation was for Gomringer: a model or “method of composition” in which fragments (or parts) of language are interrelated in order to form a meaningful *gestalt* (or whole). The fundamental significance of the “ideogram concept” for concrete poetry was such that it would lead Haroldo de Campos to later declare that the movement had explored both the possibilities and the limits of ideographic composition(s) in “western” poetry: “Nenhuma poesia ocidental será tão o mais ideogrâmica do que a poesia concreta brasileira e internacional, que pode ser descrita como o caso limite e a possibilidade extrema de composição nessa linha.”⁶⁵ Based on a rather particular, albeit universalist interpretation of what has otherwise been considered by linguists to be a form of *logographic* script, a visual depiction (or transcription) of language via the word (*logos*), the conception of the ideogram (pro)posed by the concrete poets is said to have two senses, one superficial and the other profound. The first or “general” sense is that of a “spatial or visual syntax,” evident in graphic or iconic symbols that constitute a form of both writing and drawing. The second or “special” sense is that of a “method of composition based on direct-analogical, not logical-discursive juxtaposition of elements.”⁶⁶ Not only is the ideogram itself composed by means of an *other* logic, that of analogy, but in a poetic composition the interrelations between the signs themselves – and by extension, the things they designate – may even be highlighted due to similarities in form or structure that further accentuate the interactions between the things represented. This “special” sense was derived, in principle, from the characteristics of the Chinese “written character” studied in Fenollosa’s aforementioned essay and elaborated in Ezra Pound’s subsequent criticism and poetry. Ultimately, the visibly analogical logic that

characterizes the Chinese (and Japanese) *kanji* script displayed, for the concrete poets, “an example of pure relational syntax, based exclusively on word order.”⁶⁷ If on a superficial level the arrangement of signs determines the significance (or meaning) of the phrase, on a more profound level it can actually reveal, or else forge, significant (or meaningful) relations between words and/or things. Concrete poetry thus incorporates both a “spatial”/“visual” and a “relational” syntax in order to organize, or structure, dynamically “verbivocovisual” compositions that function as ideograms.

From a Eurocentric perspective, the ideogram has historically been viewed as a particular stage in the evolution of writing systems from pictographic to alphabetic scripts. If in pictographic writing it is evidently the thing or image that is depicted visually, in ideographic writing it is essentially the idea or concept that is represented iconically. The ideogram as such not only figures as a trace (or inscription) of a concrete thing, but also, and more importantly, configures a design (or description) of the abstract interrelations between things. For Fenollosa, the “ideographic roots” of the Chinese written language had developed into a form of script that does not merely depict things, *per se*, but also represents a “*verbal idea of action*.”⁶⁸ As such, rather than constitute nouns, the so-called “primitive Chinese characters” instead appear to trace “shorthand pictures of actions or processes.”⁶⁹

For example, the ideograph meaning “to speak” is a mouth with two words and a flame coming out of it. The sign meaning “to grow up with difficulty” is grass with a twisted root. But this concrete *verb* quality, both in nature and in the Chinese signs, becomes far more striking and poetic when we pass from such simple, original pictures to compounds. In this process of compounding, two things added together do not produce a third thing but suggest some fundamental relation between them.⁷⁰

In passing from “simple” signs to “compounds,” Fenollosa notes how not only things (as objects) but also ideas (as concepts) can be concretely represented in a form of graphic

writing. The sinologist appears to subscribe to an Oriental philosophy, an *other* mode of thinking, that does not differentiate things and actions as such. Accordingly, things are perceived as “only the terminal points, or rather the meeting points of actions, cross-sections cut through actions, snap-shots.”⁷¹ In actual fact, neither an “isolated thing” (a “true” noun) nor an “abstract motion” (a “pure” verb) exists in nature, or in reality for that matter.⁷² What does matter, however, are the interactions between things, the interrelations that characterize “things in motion, motion in things.”⁷³ Ultimately, being that “*thing* and *action* are not formally separated” in the Chinese (or Japanese) written language(s), concrete poetry would incorporate such an inherent “tendency for nounising and verbification” for its own functional purposes, subverting prescribed grammatical norms in the process.⁷⁴

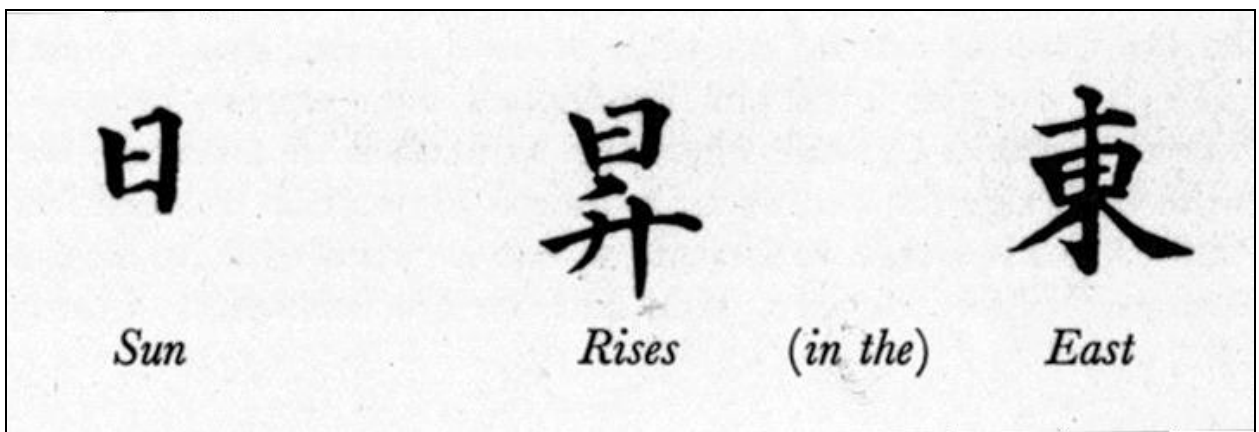
Whether as an aesthetic vision, as Pound would suggest, or as a fantastic “hallucination,” as Derrida might insinuate, Fenollosa viewed ideographic writing as both a dynamic (in the sense of action) and a metaphorical (in the sense of resemblance) script that directly and concretely corresponds to nature as such. Inasmuch as *metaphor* is defined as “the use of material images to suggest immaterial relations,” the ideogram itself constitutes a form of graphic metaphor that conveys abstract concepts via concrete signs.⁷⁵ If the ideogram is, in a sense, simply a written (or drawn) representation of an *idea*, as the etymology of the term would imply, it becomes apparent that the idea only arises in the relations between the things designated. The form(ul)ation of (inter)relations is therefore an essential and fundamental aspect of ideographic writing. As Fenollosa himself declares: “Relations are more real and more important than the things which they relate [...] This is more than analogy, it is identity of structure.”⁷⁶ Metaphorical relations are not only a revelation of content, but are also a function of form. For its part, the form or structure of the

ideogram operates via a technique of superimposition that basically combines otherwise singular elements into a compound figure. The more abstract the idea or concept is, the more “complex” the concrete metaphor becomes. For Haroldo de Campos, such “concreteness” offers a creative “stimulus” for the “poetic imagination:”

Realmente, quando se considera que a palavra “sonho” [...] é expressa pelos desenhos abreviados, superpostos, de vegetação crescendo + rede de pesca + cobertura + sol-pôr, não se poderá deixar de pensar nos estímulos que este simples vocábulo, a partir do seu casulo gráfico, oferece à imaginação poética. É ele, por si só, um verdadeiro diorama de estratos metafóricos, mantidos eventualmente em latência sob a pátina do tempo e os amortecedores do uso cotidiano, mas guardando, não obstante, toda sua concreticidade. Assim como o poeta ocidental joga com as metáforas adormecidas no leito geológico da língua – explicitando, digamos, um “astro” que se esconde na palavra “desastre” – o poeta japonês, com eficácia talvez maior, utiliza inclusive as analogias gráficas de seu material vocabular.⁷⁷

Such is the means by which the ideogram functions or operates: an idea has been represented graphically via concrete things and/or actions by means of otherwise abstract interrelations. Curiously enough, Campos’ choice of the word *dream* perhaps reveals other, ulterior motives by highlighting the potential of the ideogram as a principle for poetic composition. Campos thereby relates the use of (verbal) metaphors in Western poetry with the use of (visual) analogies in Japanese poetry. Indeed, Fenollosa’s principal concern was no different in studying the Chinese “written character” as a “medium for poetry.” With its “metaphoric overtones,” the (oriental) ideogram is also seen as superior to (occidental) verse in a line as simple as “The sun rises in the east.”⁷⁸ According to Fenollosa:

The overtones vibrate against the eye. The wealth of composition in characters makes possible a choice of words in which a single dominant overtone colors every plane of meaning. That is perhaps the most conspicuous quality of Chinese poetry. Let us examine our line [...] The sun, the shining, on one side, on the other the sign of the east, which is the sun entangled in the branches of a tree. And in the middle sign, the verb “rise,” we have further homology; the sun is above the horizon, but beyond that the single upright line



Example from “The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry” – Ernest Fenollosa (1908/1918)

is like the growing trunk-line of the tree sign. This is but a beginning, but it points a way to the method, and to the method of intelligent reading.⁷⁹

Such a “method” of composition would also point to a new mode of (ideo)graphic writing in the form of concrete poetry.

Inasmuch as the ideogram itself appears to constitute a “true diorama of metaphorical layers,” according to Campos, a series of ideograms can thereby be interrelated by means of visual or “graphic” analogies, in addition to verbal ones, in order to form a more poetic composition. The simple complexity of the otherwise laconic Japanese *haiku* derives, for instance, from such an interplay of verbal, visual, and even sonorous factors. Calligraphically drawn (or written) in the ideographic *kanji* script, a typical haiku is composed by depicting things or images whose subtle interrelations are intentionally charged with metaphorical meaning and illuminating insight about the perceived essence or nature of the things represented. In terms of form or structure, the haiku similarly operates by means of a superimposition of images that is incidentally akin to the cinematographic technique of montage. Indeed, it was the Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein who proposed affinities between the ideogram, the haiku, and montage in the influential essay “The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram” (1929). In order to discuss the effective use of montage in the cinema, Eisenstein frames his argument around the complex interrelations between images (or signs) in ideographic writing, considering especially the “copulative” ideograms, which are referred to as “hieroglyphs:

The point is that the copulation (perhaps we had better say, the combination) of two hieroglyphs of the simplest series is to be regarded not as their sum, but as their product, i.e. as a value of another dimension, another degree; each, separately, corresponds to an *object*, to a fact, but their combination corresponds to a *concept*. From separate objects has been fused – the ideogram. By the combination of two “depictables” is achieved the representation of something that is graphically undepictable.⁸⁰

Once more, in ideographic writing the interrelations between the things or objects designated are what yields the ideas or concepts. Relations are formulated between (simple) signs that depict things, which in turn combine to form (complex) signs that represent ideas. A series of examples are thereby said to illustrate such a process:

water + eye = to weep
ear + door = to listen
dog + mouth = to bark
mouth + child = to scream
mouth + bird = to sing
knife + heart = sorrow

For Eisenstein, such a combination of concrete things or images in order to represent abstract ideas or concepts in writing corresponds to his own technique of (“intellectual”) montage in the cinema, a selective process of “combining shots that are *depictive*, single in meaning, neutral in content – into *intellectual* contexts and series.”⁸¹ More relevant for poetry, in this case, is the realization that the formal superimposition (or combination) of images in montage is also characteristic of haiku, whose effective “method” of “resolution” is perceived to be “completely analogous to the structure of the ideogram.”⁸² Eisenstein thus arrives, by a different route, at the poetic possibilities inherent in ideographic writing. Returning to Fenollosa, then, the ideogram becomes significant not merely as a visual depiction of ideas by means of things, but furthermore as a graphic description (or transcription) of the interrelations between things. As Haroldo de Campos argues, “o que importa no ensaio de Fenollosa não é o argumento ‘pictográfico’ (ideograma enquanto pintura de idéias via coisas), mas o argumento ‘relacional’ (ideograma enquanto processo relacional, enquanto metáfora estrutural).”⁸³ Ultimately the ideogram as “structural metaphor” would have profound, albeit diverse, effects on later movements in modernist and

avant-garde poetry, both in Europe and in the Americas. Following such a “tradition,” concrete poetry would thereby incorporate both the “ideogramic method” (via Fenollosa/Pound) and the “cinematographic principle” of montage (via Eisenstein) in its own theory and practice.

In the “pilot plan for concrete poetry” (1958), a manifesto that synthesizes the main theoretical principles of the movement, the Noigandres poets describe both the structure and the significance of “verbivocovisual” ideograms in terms that not only draw from contemporary developments in concrete art and music, but also from modernist conceptions of ideographic writing and especially its application in poetry and the cinema. Due to the evident preoccupation with form and/or composition, both “concrete” formulas and “ideogramic” methods are perceived as relevant to the new media of information and communication technologies. The ideogram as such becomes for concrete poetry an “appeal to nonverbal communication.” What does the concrete poem communicate?

Concrete poem communicates its own structure: structure-content. Concrete poem is an object in and by itself, not an interpreter of exterior objects and/ or more or less subjective feelings. Its material word (sound, visual form, semantical charge). Its problem: a problem of functions-relations of this material.⁸⁴

This description of concrete poetry recalls Gomringer’s statements about the objectivity of the constellation, which is said to constitute a reality in itself. The assertion that the “concrete poem communicates its own structure” also evokes the visionary German critic Walter Benjamin’s proposition concerning the nature of language as such. In response to the question “*What* does language communicate?” Benjamin rather enigmatically affirms that “all language communicates itself. Or more precisely: all language communicates itself *in* itself; it is in the purest sense the ‘medium’ of the communication.”⁸⁵ In a sense, “the

medium is the message,” to cite the new media guru Marshall McLuhan, though the concrete poem actually communicates both its form (or structure) and its content (or message). As in concrete art and concrete/electronic music, in concrete poetry the most basic or fundamental element of the composition is the material, which is language. Inasmuch as the linguistic *sign* is composed of a signifier (acoustic-image) and a signified (concept), the concrete poem formulates multiple relations between the sounds, images, and meanings of words that in turn act as things. Such a multiplicity of interrelations is organized or structured according to ideographic principles of spatial and/or relational syntax. Concrete poetry is thus able to both verbally and nonverbally communicate information or meaning via the medium of language.

By communicating its “structure-content” via word, image, and sound, concrete poetry is a definitively “verbivocovisual” art. As the manifesto explains, the concrete poem, “by using the phonetical system (digits) and analogical syntax, creates a specific linguistical area – ‘verbivocovisual’ – which shares the advantages of nonverbal communication, without giving up word’s virtualities.”⁸⁶ The incommensurability between ideographic and alphabetic scripts is thereby resolved by a rather creative and original synthesis. In principle, words are composed of letters and ideograms are composed of figures. In concrete poetry, however, words are made to function as ideograms, as not only the material relations between letters but also between signs are re-drawn by analogy. The term *verbivocovisual* itself constitutes a prime example of such a type of “word-ideogram,” formed by combining single words, along with the corresponding concepts, into one compound word-phrase that preserves elemental meanings while simultaneously generating another, *complex* idea. Not only does the adjective “verbivocovisual” aptly describe a fundamental characteristic of concrete poetry, its

verbal, vocal (or acoustic), and visual dimensions, but it also prescribes the basic practice of concrete poetry, its interrelation of linguistic materials in order to represent otherwise incommunicable ideas as poetic information.

Ultimately, the concrete poem not only communicates information, *per se*, but also the actual means or medium of communication itself, its meta-information. Such a process is termed “metacommunication,” which is defined as the “coincidence and simultaneity of verbal and nonverbal communication.”⁸⁷ Inasmuch as concrete poetry, in principle, is concerned with the “communication of forms, of a structure-content,” and not necessarily with “the usual message communication,” the form or structure is therefore the content or message, and vice-versa.⁸⁸ Once more the formula *form (structure) = content (message)* becomes both the *modus operandi* and the *raison d’être* of the new poetry, which as such aspires to fulfill the age-old dream of isomorphism (or resemblance) between the word and the world. The concrete poets accordingly redefine *isomorphism* in terms that recall concrete art:

The conflict form-subject looking for identification, we call isomorphism. Parallel to form-subject isomorphism, there is a space-time isomorphism, which creates movement. In a first moment of concrete poetry pragmatics, isomorphism tends to physiognomy, that is a movement imitating natural appearance (*motion*); organic form and phenomenology of composition prevail. In a more advanced stage, isomorphism tends to resolve itself into pure structural movement (*movement* properly said); at this phase, geometric form and mathematics of composition (sensible rationalism) prevail.⁸⁹

Isomorphism in concrete poetry is thus said to occur along two “parallel” lines (or planes) of conceptualization that actually appear to intersect: on one level words are related to things, while on another level space is related to time. In both cases, however, the concrete poem relates *words-as-things* within a *space-as-time* in order to represent the idea of movement. In progressive “moments” or “stages” of concrete poetry, there appears a certain development

toward paradoxically more abstract structures in order to realize movement in a more “concrete” sense. As for the isomorphism between word and thing, space and time: inasmuch as identity is *always already* predicated by difference, it is the inherent tension which constitutes such a multiplicity of interrelations that perhaps inspired Augusto de Campos to resolutely define concrete poetry as the “tension of things-words in space-time.”⁹⁰

It is a hallmark of concrete poetry that theory corresponds to practice. Augusto de Campos’ “tensão” (1956), which has been described as a “fully realized” concrete poem, appears to exemplify his own minimalist definition of concrete poetry.⁹¹ If “eis os amantes” is characteristic of the earlier “organic-phenomenological” phase, then “tensão” is typical of the later “geometric-mathematical” phase, which is considered to be the “orthodox” moment of concrete poetry.⁹² One can (virtually) see, hear, and read the aforementioned elements of concrete art, music, and poetry that converge to (in)form such an ideal “verbivocovisual” ideogram. The form or structure of the poem displays an abstract shape, a symmetrical pattern, which establishes horizontal, vertical, and even diagonal relations of contrast and/or opposition that in turn create a dynamic equilibrium as a consequence, or effect, of a tension that is both induced and produced. A sense of rhythm is likewise evident in the (recorded) audio version of the poem, in which syllables and words interact in multiple and meaningful ways, as if the series of phonemes were arranged in sets or rows of notes. The linguistic material, for its part, is used for the construction of a poetic object, a constellation of signs, whose brevity and concision maximize meaning through minimalist means. Word-things are furthermore related according to both a spatial and an analogical syntax that orders (or organizes) verbal materials according to visual and acoustic factors of “proximity and similitude.”⁹³ Not only does the poem communicate the meaning of its words-in-relation,

com som	can tem	
con tem	ten são	tam bem
	tom bem	sem som

“tensão” – Augusto de Campos (1956)

ring tone	sing note	
ding dong	tone poem	long song
	lone note	tone gone

“tone-poem” – Augusto de Campos / Marco Alexandre de Oliveira

which actually constitute a meditation on the tension between sound and silence, presence and absence, but it also communicates the means (or medium) of its own process of meaning. Ultimately, the form (or structure) corresponds to the content (or message) by reproducing the tension(s) via a spatiotemporal composition that generates a multiplicity of interrelations. As such, an otherwise abstract idea of *tension* is ideographically represented via the differential, intersemiotic (de)sign of a new poetics.

The new poetry invented by the Noigandres poets of Brazil emerged in response to modernist developments in art, music, and poetry. Such a correspondence between contemporary (neo)vanguard movements displays both dialogical and dialectical relations between Latin America and Europe, inasmuch as geographical interactions evoke historical reactions that have come to describe and/or prescribe transatlantic artistic and cultural production. If throughout modernity Europe (as metropolis) has been promoted as the center or *locus* of Occidental culture, Latin America (as ex-colony) has been relegated to the periphery, a “savage” no-man’s-land within the so-called “art world,” the “barbarian” *marginalia* of an exclusive “world literature,” etc. Despite the originality of Spanish American *vanguardia* and Brazilian *modernismo*, such innovative movements arguably tended to imitate European trends, though such a form of cultural “mimicry” often masked *other* intentions and/or realized *different* ends. In the case of *concretismo*, however, which arose in synchrony with its aforementioned counterparts, there is no longer any kind of “dependency” or “underdevelopment,” much less any species of “primitivism” which may (or may not) have characterized its predecessors. As a form of transcultural dialogue of revolt that effectively resulted in the formation of a revolutionary poetics, concrete poetry represents the unprecedented advancement of an ex-centric *otherness*, the unrivaled progression of a deconstructive *difference* that cannibalizes a “universal” tradition by means of strategies of critical appropriation and tactics of original transformation. Such a cannibal logic ultimately re-writes logocentric signs and re-draws Eurocentric designs into a new configuration. In order to reorder the order from its border, the New World order is to serve

European art and/or culture not as a *waiter*, as one who (a)waits, but rather as an *hors d'œuvre*, as that which comes “outside” or “apart” from the main “work” or (dis)course in question.

This section relates the “re-cannibalization” of the poetics of Modernism and the “historical” avant-garde by *concretismo* as a neo-avant-garde movement. It focuses on critical appropriation and original transformation of the (ideo)graphic experiments of innovative writers and/or artists such as Stéphane Mallarmé, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, E.E. Cummings, Guillaume Apollinaire, Vicente Huidobro, José Juan Tablada, F.T. Marinetti, Ardengo Soffici, Tristan Tzara, and Kurt Schwitters. It also considers the significance of concrete poetry as a (neo)baroque expression of an “anthropophagic reason” founded on the (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness* of Latin America in relation to Europe.

modernism & the avant-garde

As a blueprint or outline that fundamentally re-designs a poetics, the “pilot plan for concrete poetry” anthologizes the movement’s antecedents and/or predecessors as part of an international transcultural heritage that becomes, in a sense, a menu of appetizers:

Forerunners: Mallarmé (*Un coup de dés*, 1897): the first qualitative jump: “subdivisions prismatiques de l’idée;” space (“blancs”) and typographical devices as substantive elements of composition. Pound (*The Cantos*); ideogramic method. Joyce (*Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*): word-ideogram; organic interpenetration of time and space. Cummings: atomization of words, physiognomical typography; expressionistic emphasis on space. Apollinaire (*Calligrammes*): the vision, rather than the praxis. Futurism, Dadaism: contributions to the life of the problem. In Brazil: Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954): “in pills, minutes of poetry.” João Cabral de Melo Neto (born 1920 – *The Engineer* and *The Psychology of Composition* plus *Anti-Ode*): direct speech, economy and functional architecture of verse.⁹⁴

Such a diverse lineage, rather than establishing a line of descent, instead constitutes a constellation of precursors, all of which in some form or other relate to concrete developments in modernist and/or avant-garde poetry. The list of “forerunners” appropriately begins with Mallarmé, whose aforementioned *Un coup de dés* has been described by French writer Paul Valéry as a “spectacle idéographique d’une crise ou aventure intellectuelle.”⁹⁵ Mallarmé himself alludes to such an “adventure” in his essay “Crisis of Poetry” (1896), in which he declares that a “fundamental and fascinating crisis in literature is now at hand.”⁹⁶ The “crisis” occurred as traditional prosody was confronted with modern free verse, which would reunite literature and music, word and sound:

The entire language was fitted out for prosody, and therein it re-discovered its vital sense of pause. Now it could fly off, freely scattering its numberless and irreducible elements. Or we might well compare it to the multiple sounds issuing from a purely verbal orchestration.⁹⁷

The “originality” of free verse was derived from its essentially “polymorphic” character, according to Mallarmé, whose “ideal” poem would display “a reasonable number of words stretched beneath our mastering glance, arranged in enduring figures, and followed by silence.”⁹⁸ Beauty would not be revealed by “*description*” but by “evocation, *allusion*, *suggestion*,” terms that indicate a “decisive tendency in modern literature, a tendency which limits literature and yet sets it free.”⁹⁹ Anticipating the problem of (rhythmic) movement in concrete poetry, Mallarmé foresees the “initiative” being taken “by the words themselves, which will be set in motion as they meet unequally in collision.”¹⁰⁰ Finally, the poet discusses the significance of “blank spaces:”

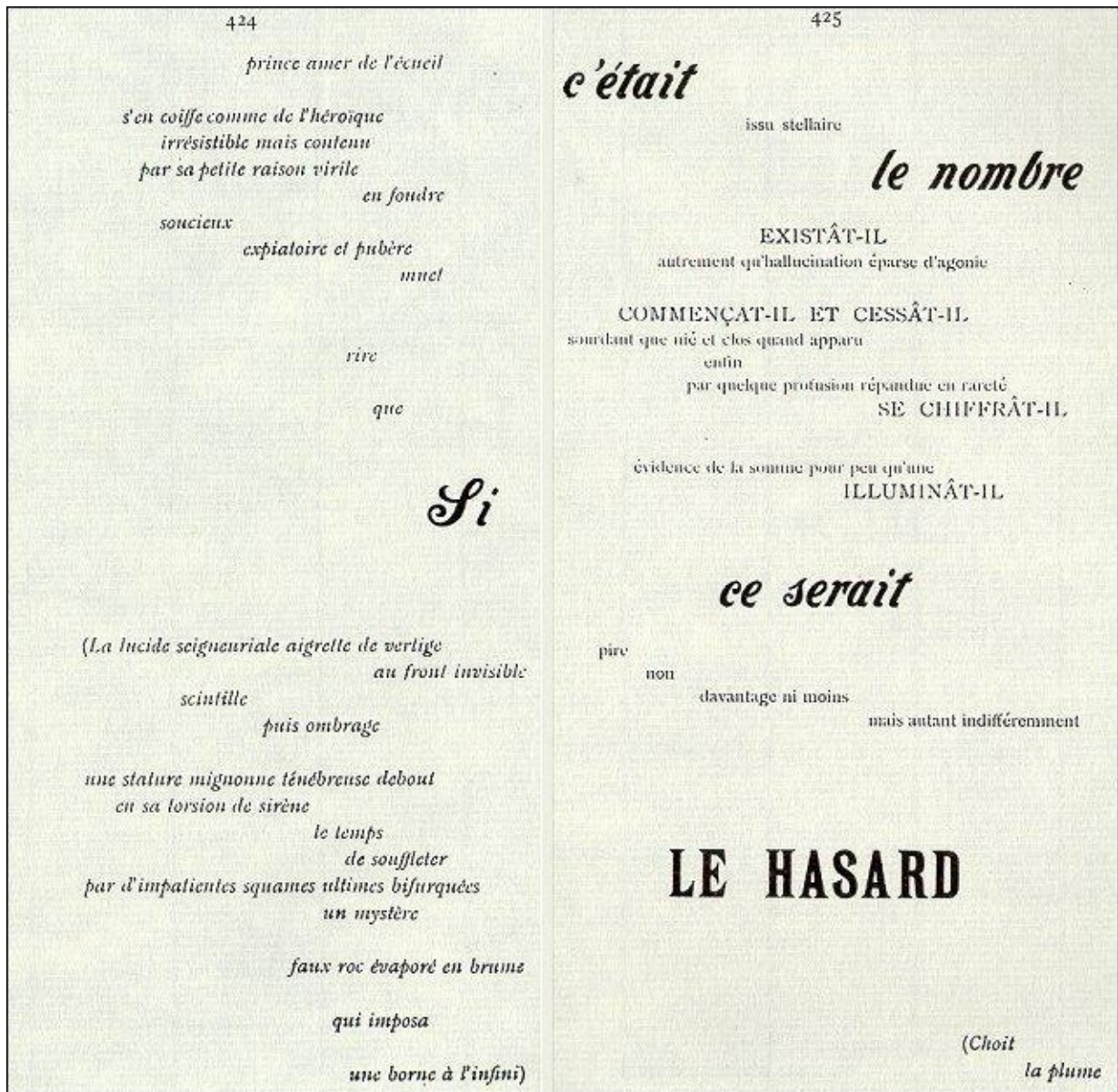
Everything will be hesitation, disposition of parts, their alternations and relationships – all this contributing to the rhythmic totality, which will be the very silence of the poem, in its blank spaces, as that silence is translated by each structural element in its own way.¹⁰¹

Such a figurative “disposition” would, as such, prefigure a “crisis” in verse that would culminate in *Un coup de dés*, the primary “forerunner” of concrete poetry.

In his preface to *Un coup de dés*, Mallarmé acknowledges the novelty of the “distribution of space,” asserting that “the ‘blanks’ in fact assume an importance.”¹⁰² The “literary advantage” of such a dispersion, “which mentally separates groups of words or words between themselves,” is to either accelerate or decelerate the movement according to a “simultaneous vision of the Page.”¹⁰³ The “prismatic subdivision of the idea” into a multiplicity of parts, in effect, also corresponds to the juxtaposition and/or superimposition of signs that is characteristic of ideography. Valéry’s characterization of Mallarmé “intellectual adventure” as an “ideographic spectacle” is further explored by Octavio Paz, who asks whether, in “the dispersion of its fragments,” the poem-constellation might not figure as “that vibrant space on which a few signs are projected like an ideogram that might be a purveyor of meanings.”

Space, projection, ideogram: these three words allude to an operation that consists in unfolding a place, a here, that will receive and support a writing: fragments that regroup and seek to form a figure, a nucleus of meanings. When I imagine the poem as a configuration of signs on an animated space I do not think of the page of a book [...] Constellations: ideograms. I think of a music never heard, music for the eyes, a music never seen. I think of *Un Coup de dés*.¹⁰⁴

For Paz, whose mandala-poem *Blanco* (1968) dialogues with *Un coup de dés*, Mallarmé created the “model of a new genre,” thus inaugurating “a new poetic manner” characterized by “condensation” and “dispersion.”¹⁰⁵ Such an ideographic “configuration of signs” evidently involves the materiality of writing and/or the visibility of script, which necessarily unfolds both in time and in space. Hence the significance, for concrete poetry, of both space and “typographical devices” as “substantive elements” of the composition, in which words



Page from *Un coup de dés* – Stéphane Mallarmé (1897)

are scattered across the page like stars in the sky. Here space also becomes the representation of the presence of absence, or of a silence that is paradoxically full of possibility for sound. Mallarmé himself notes that the “design” of *Un coup de dés*, if performed or read aloud, resembles the notation of a musical score, as “the difference in the printed characters between the preponderant, secondary, and adjacent motifs, dictates their importance for oral expression; the disposition of the characters: in the middle, on the top, or the bottom of the page, indicates the rise and fall in intonation.”¹⁰⁶ If typography differentiates between the ideas or “motifs,” space prescribes the intonation and the tempo, or rhythm, as the Word proceeds into the vast, heavenly sphere(s) of the Muse. Moving forward and onward, then, poetry makes a “qualitative jump,” according to the Noigandres poets, that very same “qualitative leap” envisaged by Benjamin upon reading Mallarmé, toward a moment “when writing, advancing ever more deeply into the graphic regions of its new eccentric figurativeness, will take sudden possession of an adequate factual content.”¹⁰⁷ For concrete poetry, such an “adequate” content would be the form of the poem itself, its (isomorphic) structure that relates time and space, language and the world. As if by chance, or else by a fortuitous throw of the dice, *Un coup de dés* thus becomes a point of reference for future typographical experiments with the visible and/or material word, spanning the various historical avant-garde movements and culminating in concrete poetry, which according to Haroldo de Campos “strove to push the Mallarméan project to its ultimate consequences.”¹⁰⁸

Such a “project” or “legacy,” according to Paz, refers to a new “form” of poetry:

The *legacy* to which *Un Coup de dés* expressly refers – without an express legatee: *à quelqu’un ambigu* – is a form; and more than that, it is the form of possibility itself: a poem closed to the world but open to the space without a name. A now in perpetual rotation, a nocturnal noon – and a deserted here. To populate it: the future poet’s temptation. Our legacy is not Mallarmé’s word but the space opened by his word.¹⁰⁹

In addition to the Mallarméan lineage, concrete poetry is also said to belong to an “ideogramic tradition” that originated with Ezra Pound.¹¹⁰ *The Pisan Cantos* (1948) in particular serve as a prime example of Pound’s so-called “ideogramic method,” a technique of composition in which fragments of text(s) and/or metaphorical images are combined, without rhyme or reason (in the sense of conventional logic), in order to suggest otherwise inexpressible concepts. In such a *paratactic* style of poetry, in which verses or phrases are juxtaposed without the use of connectives (or conjunctions), ideas are formulated via the subtle interrelations between the images. Meanwhile, the space in between the fragments also becomes significant as both a visual and an organizational factor, as “clusters” of words also communicate the form or structure as meaning, just as in the poetic constellation.¹¹¹

According to Haroldo de Campos:

Em *The Cantos* [...] o ideograma é o princípio de estrutura presidindo à interação de blocos de idéias, que se criticam, reiteram e iluminam mutuamente. O isolamento de núcleos temáticos em cadeias de essências e medulas impõe a tomada de consciência do espaço gráfico, como fator de organização do poema.¹¹²

The ideogram thus becomes for Pound a “method of composition” with concrete implications for poetry. Augusto de Campos has also pointed out how, in Pound’s modern epic: “fragmentos se justapõem a fragmentos, Cantos a Cantos, sem qualquer ordenação silogística, atendendo tão somente aos princípios ideogrâmicos.”¹¹³ Such “principles” are already apparent in Pound’s earlier Imagist poetry, such as the renowned “In a Station of the Metro” (1913), which juxtaposes or superimposes concrete images in order to form analogical or metaphorical relations between the verses, ultimately creating an abstract meaning that is effectively open to multiple interpretations:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough.

Affinities with the Japanese haiku and ideographic writing are indeed several, and many of Pound's so-called Imagist poems, with their concrete or "direct treatment of the thing," are actually free, creative translations (or recreations) of Chinese poetry, a fact which caused T.S. Eliot to once famously remark that Pound was "the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time."¹¹⁴ For the inventors of concrete poetry, who would critically re(dis)cover such a mode of translation, Pound's taxonomic categories of "inventors," "masters," and "diluters" are frequently evoked in manifestos and other theoretical texts, in addition to his triadic model of "*phanopeia*," "*melopoeia*," and "*logopoeia*," which in a sense corresponds to the idea of the "verbivocovisual" since it describes the interrelations between image, sound, and word in poetry. All three are at work in the *Cantos*, which incidentally is the source (of the source) of the enigmatic name "Noigandres." As the concrete poets often recall, in *Canto XX* the old scholar Levy comes across an unknown word in a poem by the Provençal poet Arnaut Daniel and exclaims: "Noigandres, eh, *noigandres* / Now what the DEFFIL can that mean!" For the concrete poets, such a cryptic, undecipherable term would become charged with potential (metaphorical) meaning, being able to represent not only the whole tradition of (western) poetry from its Provençal origins to its Modernist ends, but also a new form of poetry. The Noigandres group, as such, appropriated the word *noigandres* and, in Poundian fashion, recreated the poetic maxim: "make it new."

The innovative Noigandres poets encountered both an "inventor" and a "master" in James Joyce, whose *Finnegans Wake* (1939) is the actual source of the word "verbivocovisual," which was significantly appropriated out of context.¹¹⁵ In the poetic prose that lines the pages of this experimental novel, and of the monumental *Ulysses* (1922),

the interaction between the verbal, the vocal, and the visual aspects of language is more or less apparent in a variety of ways, such as in the graphic sensibility of written depictions and in the onomatopoeic quality of reproduced speech. The term “verbivocovisual,” as a type of “word-ideogram,” thereby serves as an example of a “metaphor-word.”¹¹⁶ Structurally, such linguistic in(ter)ventions reveal the operation of a palimpsest mode of superimposition in which not only words, but also (atomized) word-fragments, are combined in order to form meaningful compound (or portmanteau) words, a method that ultimately corresponds both to ideographic and to cinematographic principles of montage. In fact, it was Eisenstein who (co)incidentally had noted the correspondence between Joyce’s writing and the ideogram. Not only do the texts of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* relate to other forms or modes of writing, but they also incorporate several (spoken) languages in a multilingual cornucopia of tongues. As Augusto de Campos observes, such a “panorama of all flores of speech” is based on “a high-pressure compaction of borrowed words already existent in many languages through the use of basic processes of montage and word fusion.”¹¹⁷ Although the Brazilian polyglot ultimately rejects the utopian “radicalism” of Joyce’s literary “esperanto,” in part due to an evident lack of “clarity” and “objectivity,” which are deemed “indispensable” to the “new formal structures of the poem,” Campos nonetheless recognizes the “extraordinary importance of Joyce’s experiment.”¹¹⁸ The word-ideogram or metaphor-word, perceived as a form of montage, would become fundamental for a concrete poetics that explored immediacy and association in the communication of a structure-content. Inasmuch as montage itself is primarily seen as a cinematographic technique that can both interrupt the flow of time and interconnect distances in space, Joyce’s writing also illustrates an “organic interpenetration of time and space” in many scenes that actually resemble montage sequences in film,

passages where in a single phrase multiple and simultaneous actions intersect and interrelate. From this point-of-view, Décio Pignatari outlines the origins of concrete poetry by paraphrasing the disjointed ruminations of Stephen Dedalus, Joyce's antiheroic protagonist from *Ulysses*: "concrete poetry results from the ineluctable modality of the verbal, from the ineluctable modality of the visual and the ineluctable modality of the audible, in a very short space of time through very short times of space."¹¹⁹ As such, fragments of a subjective, stream-of-consciousness meditation by an artist-philosopher on the existential phenomena of the "visible" and the "audible," and on the abstract nature of space and time, are thus rewritten, reformulated, and/or reconceived by the poet-critic into an objective, concrete theory and praxis.

The "pilot plan for concrete poetry" proceeds from Joyce's "ineluctable" modalities to cite another artisan-craftsman of the word-ideogram, E. E. Cummings, whose admitted "ineluctable preoccupation with the Verb" makes the poet an inventive wordsmith in his own manner.¹²⁰ In collections such as *Is 5* (1926) and *No Thanks* (1935), Cummings employs a number of innovative resources that expressively animate the word. As in Joyce's novels, one such technique involves the "atomization" or "pulverization" of words into fragments, though in Cummings' poetry the letter (or phoneme) itself becomes the most basic element of composition. As Haroldo de Campos observes: "For Cummings the word is fissile. The cummingsian poem has the 'letter' for a fundamental element; the syllable is already, for his purposes, a complex material."¹²¹ By exploiting the formal and/or visual characteristics of the alphabet, Cummings thereby explores the "physiognomic peculiarities of certain letters," according to Pignatari, in order to establish mimetic relations with nature and the world.¹²² Such a process is evident in the phrase "mOOOn Over tOWns mOOOn," in which the letter *O* in

“mOOn” resembles or corresponds to the actual moon itself. Another instance is the poem “brIght,” which features upper and lower case letters, in addition to punctuation marks, that appear to represent “the scintillations of the stars in Morse code.”¹²³ Augusto de Campos likewise points out that the poem, which he would eventually translate (or *transcreate*), produces a “counterpoint” structure that, in effect, composes an ideogram for a starry night:

Assim, no poema “brIght” do volume *No Thanks* promove uma verdadeira tecedura contrapontística, repetindo ou invertendo em sua ordem estas simples palavras: *bright, star, big, soft, near, calm, holy, deep, alone, yes, who*, e compõe com a sua justaposição, livre de conectivos, o ideograma do impacto de uma noite estrelada [...]. O poeta americano resolve seu tema com muito maior sutileza fazendo uma letra maiúscula movimentar-se dentro das palavras *bright (brIght, bRight, Bright, BriGht)*, *yes (yeS, yEs, Yes)*, e *who (wHo, whO, Who)*, ou usando pontos de interrogação em lugar de algumas letras das palavras *star (s???, st??, sta?)* e *bright (????Ht, ?????t)*, a fim de conseguir simbolicamente uma equivalência fisiognômica do brilho estrelar.¹²⁴

A final, perhaps more striking example of such “verbal mimicry” is the meta-linguistic poem “r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r,” in which the letters that form the word *grasshopper* are dis-ordered and re-arranged in a composition that seeks to represent the movements of a grasshopper leaping, landing, and finally recomposing itself on the space of the page. In sum, the apparent “atomization of words,” “physiognomical typography,” and “expressionistic emphasis on space” cited in the “pilot plan” are ultimately related to modernist forms of ideographic writing. As Pignatari observes:

Cummings [...] succeeded in achieving real ideograms, using the best of typographic resources, even though his typography betrays habits of artisanship. Cummings uses letters and punctuation marks. Beginning with a letter, isolated or placed into relief with the first word, cummings weaves a story punctuated by lyric or satyric [sic] accidents, obliging the words to expressionistic gestures throughout the poem.¹²⁵

Besides composing “real ideograms,” Cumming’s poetry is particularly significant for concrete poetry because of its realization of a type of figurative movement via (non)verbal

brIght

bRight s??? big

(soft)

soft near calm

(Bright)

calm st?? holy

(soft briGht deep)

yeS near sta? Calm star big yEs

alone

(wHo

Yes

near deep whO big alone soft near

deep calm deep

????Ht ?????T)

Who(holy alone)holy(alone holy)alone

r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r

who

a)s w(e loo)k

upnowgath

PPEGORHRASS

eringint(o-

aThe):l

eA

!p:

S

a

(r

rIvInG

.gRrEaPsPhOs)

to

rea(be)rran(com)gi(e)ngly

,grasshopper;

means. Such a form of movement, though primarily expressionistic and/or physiognomic in nature, is produced as a dynamic function of structure and/or technique. As Cummings himself rather comically declares:

At least my theory of technique, if I have one, is very far from original; nor is it complicated. I can express it in fifteen words by quoting The Eternal Question And Answer of burlesk, viz. "Would you hit a woman with a child? – No, I'd hit her with a brick." Like the burlesk comedian, I am abnormally fond of that precision which creates movement.¹²⁶

The evident dynamism in Cumming's compositions places his work squarely in the ambit of related developments in concrete art. Affinities may also be traced with the serialism of concrete/electronic music due to the complex interrelations between elemental particles of language. Structured according to a spatial and/or relational syntax, Cummings' poetry reproduces the ideogram and counterpoint in "miniature," according to Augusto de Campos, who observes that Cummings ultimately "frees the word from its script, makes evident its formal, visual, and phonetic elements to better activate its dynamics."¹²⁷ Campos furthermore proposes correspondences with gestalt theory, in which the whole is other than, or else apart from, the sum of its parts: "it is strictly in terms of Gestalt that we understand the title of one of E. E. Cummings books of poetry: *Is 5*. For poetry, and especially for the structural poetry of Mallarmé or Cummings, two times two could rigorously be equal to five."¹²⁸ To support his argument, Campos quotes the vanguard composer Michel Fano, who notes the affinities between serialism and gestalt theory in relation to literature:

Joyce e Cummings elucidaram poderosamente as consequências literárias dessa noção que realiza uma totalidade da significação no instante, provocando a necessidade duma apreensão total da obra para a compreensão de cada uma de suas partes, e atingindo aí o princípio gestaltiano que não é possível deixar de evocar quando se trata do conceito serial.¹²⁹

Adding Mallarmé and Ezra Pound to the list of names, Campos concludes by outlining the “points” of contact that converge at the “periphery” of Latin America to form a *concrete poetry*:

A verdade é que as “subdivisões prismáticas da Ideia” de Mallarmé, o método ideogrâmico de Pound, a apresentação “verbivocovisual” joyciana e a mímica verbal de Cummings, convergem para um novo conceito de composição, para uma nova teoria da forma - uma organoforma - onde noções tradicionais como princípio-meio-fim, silogismo, verso tendem a desaparecer e ser superadas por uma organização poético-gestaltiana, poético-musical, poético-ideogrâmica da estrutura: POESIA CONCRETA.¹³⁰

The principal poet-inventors cited by the Noigandres poets in the “pilot plan” and other theoretical manifestos each originally contributed to the form(ul)ation and development of a new poetry and/or poetics based on the concrete principle of the ideogram. Of the aforementioned “forerunners,” only Pound was expressly interested in ideographic modes of writing as a method of composition. Following the innovations of Mallarmé, the French poet Guillaume Apollinaire would produce more visible efforts to incorporate the ideogram into what has become an avant-garde tradition of visual poetry. Apollinaire’s *Calligrammes* (1913-1916) was a widely influential collection of poetry that consisted of free verse poems and visual poems based, in part, on techniques of fragmentation and collage present in modernist and/or avant-garde art. Initially named “*ideogrammes lyriques*,” the actual calligrams refer to figurative picture-poems that are emblematic and/or suggestive in form, assuming shapes such as a tie, a watch, a heart, a crown, a mirror, rain, a dove, a fountain, etc. In the manner of calligraphy, the poems were written and/or drawn by Apollinaire himself, who incidentally had wished to publish the calligrams separately under the provocative title: “Et moi aussi je suis peintre” (“And I myself am also a painter”). Despite

La Cravate et la montre

LA CRAVATE
 DOU
 LOU
 REUSE
 QUE TU
 PORTES
 ET QUI T'
 ORNE O CI
 VILISÉ
 OTE- TU VEUX
 LA DIEN
 SI RESPI
 RER

COMME L'ON
 S'AMUSE
 BI
 EN

les heures

la

beau

Mon cœur

le bel
 inconnu

et le
 vers
 dantesque
 luisant et
 cadavérique

Il est — Et tout
 5 en se
 fin ra
 ni fi
 ni

les Muses
 aux portes de
 ton corps

l'infini
 redressé
 par un fou
 de philosophe

semaine

la main

Tircis

de

la

les yeux vie

pas

se

l'enfant la

dou

leur

Agla

de

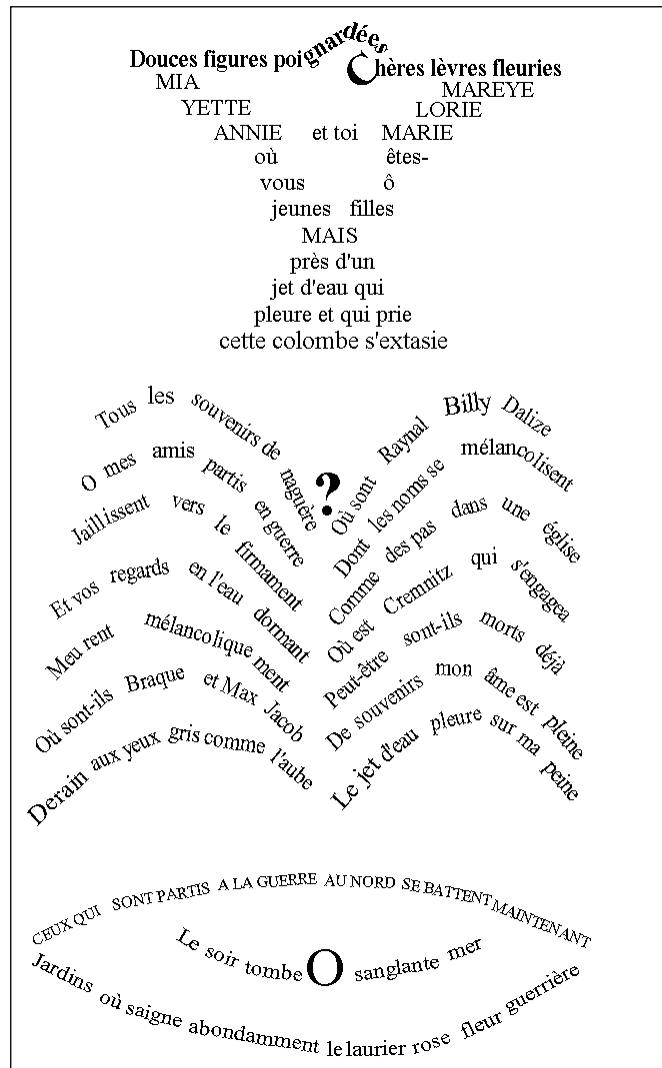
mou

sir

“La cravat et la montre” – Apollinaire (1918)

Il pleut
 des voix
 de femmes
 comme si
 elles étaient
 mortes
 même dans
 le souvenir
 et ces
 nuages
 cabrés
 pleut
 merveilleuses
 rencontres
 de ma vie
 O gouttelettes
 écoute
 si pleut
 tandis
 prennent
 à hennir
 tout un
 univers
 de villes
 auricoles
 écoule
 tomber
 les laines
 qui te retiennent
 en haut et
 en bas
 pleurent
 une anolage
 musicale

“Il pleu” – Apollinaire (1918)



“La colombe poignardée et le jet d’eau” – Apollinaire (1918)

the affinity with painting, the poet describes the *Calligrammes* as the “idealization” of free verse and modernist typography:

Quant aux *Calligrammes*, ils sont une idéalisation de la poésie vers-libriste et une précision typographique à l’époque où la typographie termine brillamment sa carrière, à l’aurore des moyens nouveaux de reproduction que sont le cinéma et le phonographe.¹³¹

Apollinaire thus reveals a sensibility for advances in technology that had resulted in the creation of new media, such as the cinema and the phonograph. Accordingly, modernist poetry, like modern art, would therefore seek to reproduce both the multiplicity (of sensations) and the simultaneity (of perceptions) that characterize modern life in the modern world. In order to realize such effects, non-linear and/or non-discursive modes of writing would be developed that were capable of synthesizing fragments of information and communicating complex ideas. Apollinaire’s prescription for a new form of poetry would thereby evoke the ideogram as a means to express *l’esprit nouveau*.

Apollinaire’s poetry and criticism were influential in the development of an international avant-garde, both in Europe and in the Americas, that would experiment with ideographic and/or calligraphic poetry. Founder of *creacionismo*, the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro created picture-poems that would appear to draw from Apollinaire in an innovative manner, despite the fact that Huidobro’s first calligram was composed in 1911. If early poems such as “La capilla aldeana” (“The Village Chapel” – 1912) assume the characteristic shapes of the objects to which they refer, later poems from *Horizon Carré* (1917) and *Tour Eiffel* (1918) also experiment with typography and space as elements of composition. In dialogue with his European counterparts, Huidobro would eventually display “poemas pintados” such as “Paysage” (“Landscape”), which was dedicated to Picasso, and “Moulin” (“Mill”), which depicted a windmill designed by the French painter Robert Delaunay, at an

Ave
 canta
 suave
 que tu canto encanta
 sobre el campo inerte
 sonos
 vierte
 y ora-
 ciones
 llora.
 Desde
 la cruz santa
 el triunfo del sol canta
 y bajo el palio azul del cielo
 deshoja tus cantares sobre el suelo.
 Une tus notas a las de la campana
 Que ya se despereza ebria de mañana
 Evangelizando la gran quietud aldeana.
 Es un amanecer que en una bondad brilla
 La capilla está ante la paz de la montaña
 Como una limosneta está ante una capilla.
 Se esparce en el paisaje el aire de una extraña
 Santidad, algo bíblico, algo de piel de oveja
 Algo como un rocío lleno de bendiciones
 Cual si el campo rezara una idílica queja
 Llena de sus caricias y de sus emociones.
 La capilla es como una vieja acurrucada
 Y al pie de la montaña parece un cuento de hada.
 Junto a ella como una bandada de mendigos
 Se agrupan y se acercan unos cuantos castaños
 Que se asoman curiosos por todos los postigos
 Con la malevolencia de los viejos huraños.
 Y en el cuadrado lleno de ambiente y de frescura
 En el paisaje alegre con castidad de lino
 Pinta un brochazo negro la sotana del cura.
 Cuando ya la tarde alarga su sombra sobre el camino...

“La capilla aldeana” – Vicente Huidobro (1912)

PAYSAGE

LE SOIR ON SE PROMENERA SUR DES ROUTES PARALLELES

LA LUNE
OÙ
ELLE REGARDE

L'ARBRE
ETAIT
PLUS
HAUT
QUE LA
MONTAGNE

MAIS LA
MONTAGNE
ETAIT SI LARGE
QU'ELLE DEPASSAIT
LES BORDS DE LA TERRE

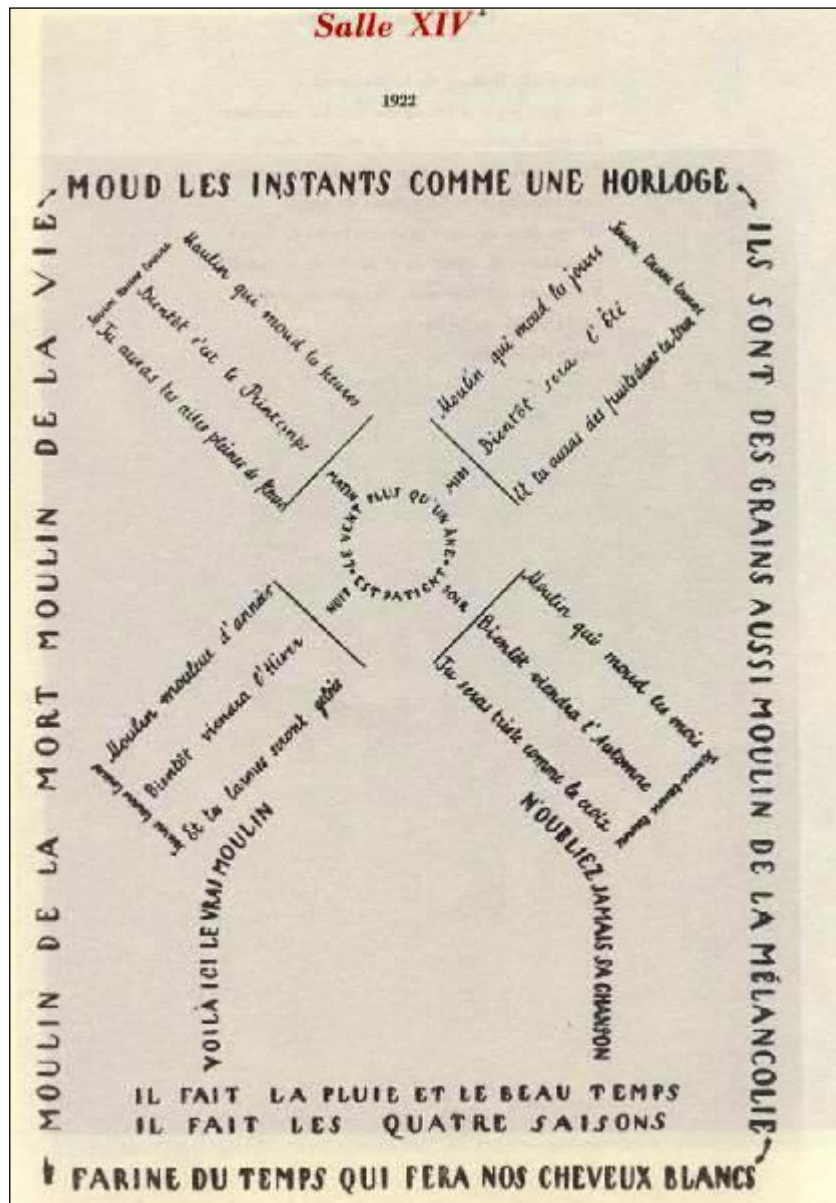
LE
FLEUVE
QUI
COULE
SUR
LES
POISSONS

ATTENTION A NE PAS
JOUER SUR L'HERBE
FRAICHEMENT PEINTE

UNE CHANSON CONDUIT LES BREBIS VERS L'ETABLE

Vincent HUIDOBRO,
Paris 1917.

“Paysage” – Vicente Huidobro (1917)

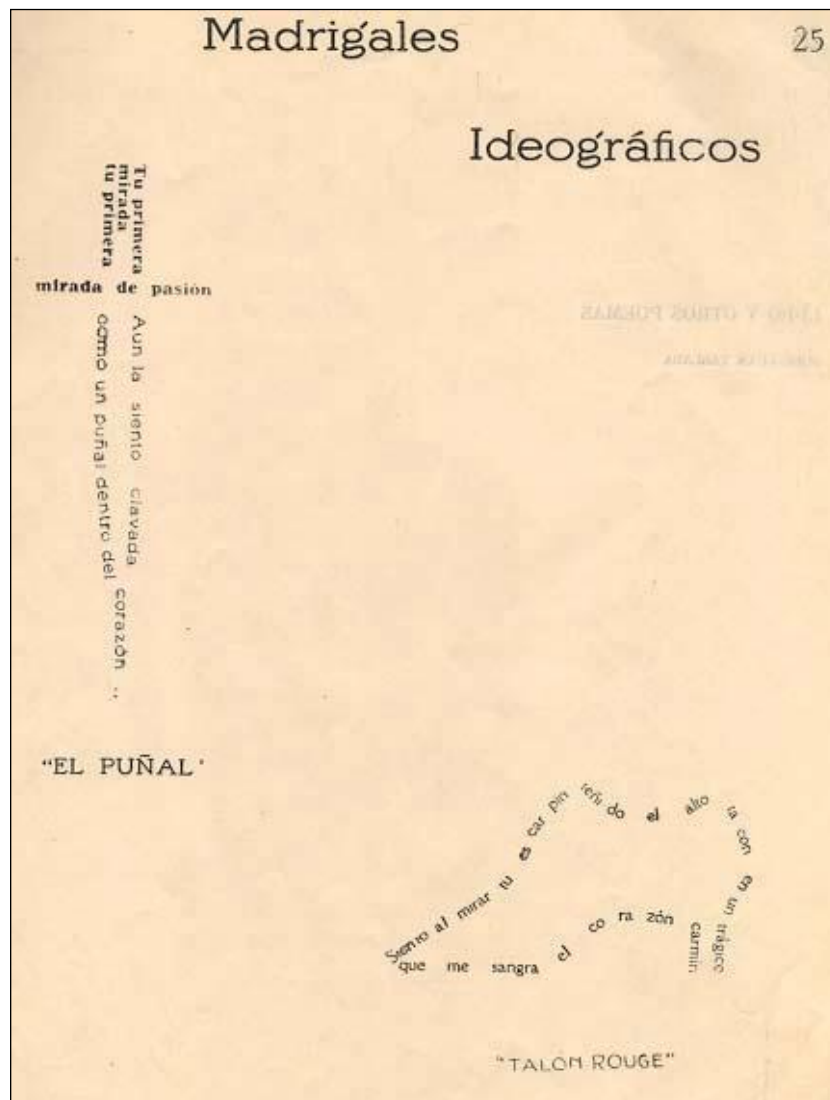


“Moulin” – Vicente Huidobro (1917)

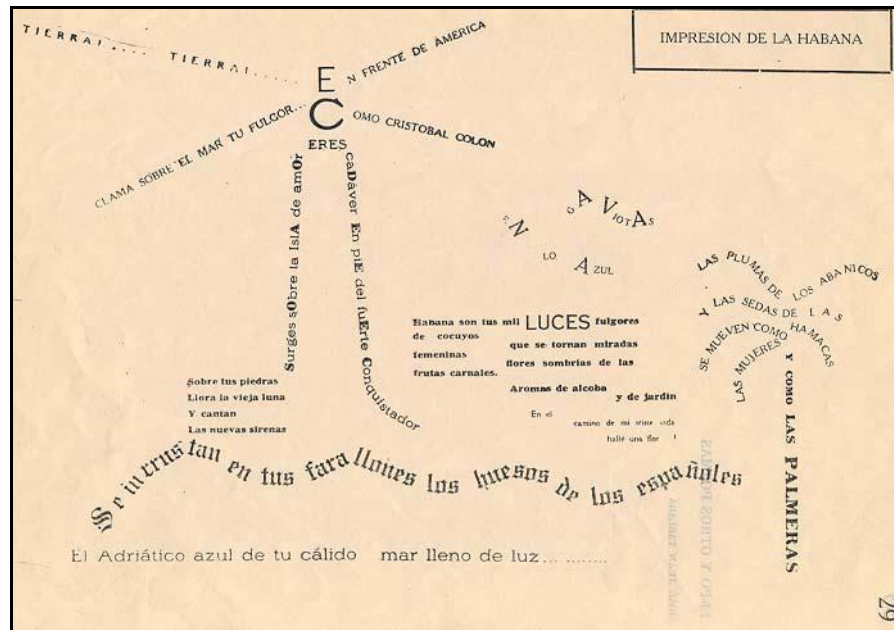
exhibition titled *Salle XIV* (1922). In addition to Huidobro, the Mexican poet José Juan Tablada, who actually introduced the Japanese haiku in Latin America, also composed a series of calligrams that were original despite being imitative in form. “Madrigales ideográficos” (1915), composed of the poems “El puñal” and “El talon rouge,” which (calli)graphically depict a “dagger” and “red heels,” was created around the same time as Apollinaire’s “*ideogrammes lyriques*,” perhaps after Tablada had received word of the Parisian avant-garde from compatriot Marius de Zayas, the Mexican artist who would participate in the New York Dada scene.¹³² Following “La impresión de la Habana” (1918) Tablada published *Li Po y otros poemas* (1920), a collection of innovative visual poetry which opens with a quote by Mallarmé.¹³³ Tablada’s calligrams ranged from illustrative to evocative figurations of objects and/or landscapes, always with metaphorical overtones. According to critic Willard Bohn, Tablada was both “preoccupied” with “the notion of a visual language” and “excited” by “the revolutionary potential of ideographic expression.”¹³⁴ Tablada himself describes his (ideo)graphic poems as “architectonic” and “synthetic:”

Mis poemas actuales son un franco lenguaje, algunos no son simplemente gráficos sino arquitectónicos. “La calle en que vivo” es una calle con casas, iglesias, crímenes y almas en pena. Como la “Impresión de la Habana” es ya todo un pasaje [...] Todo es sintético, discontinuo y portanto dinámico; lo explicativo y lo retórico están eliminados para siempre; es una sucesión de estados sustantivos [...] La ideografía tiene, a mi modo de ver, la fuerza de una expresión “simultaneamente lírica y gráfica,” a reserva de conservar el secular carácter ideofónico. Además, la parte gráfica substituye ventajosamente la discursiva o explicativa de la antigua poesía, dejando los temas literarios en calidad de “poesía pura,” como lo quería Mallarmé. Mi preocupación actual es la síntesis ... porque sólo sintetizando creo poder expresar la vida moderna en su dinamismo y en su multiplicidad.¹³⁵

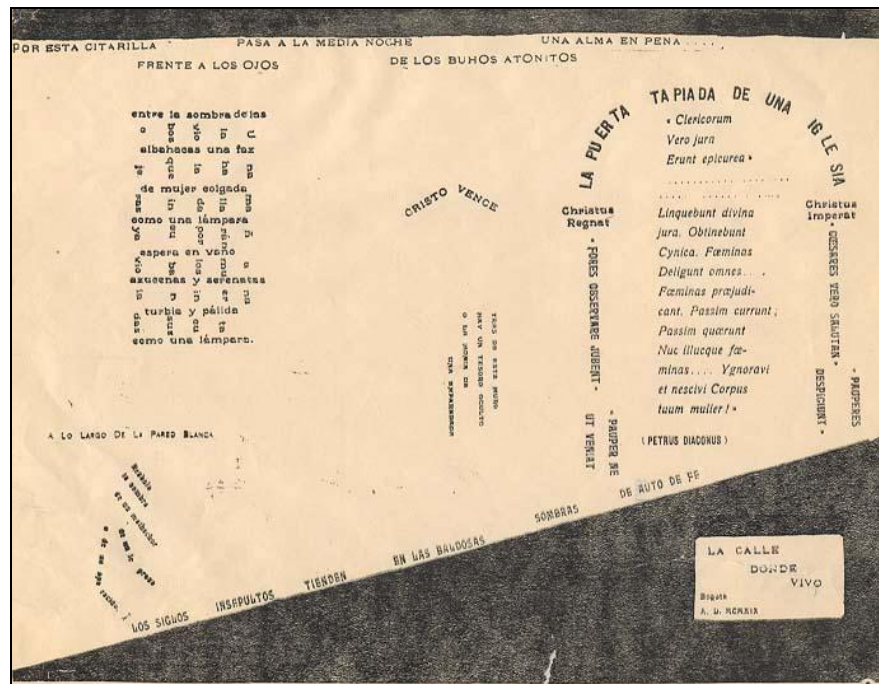
By formulating his poetics in terms of “synthesis,” “dynamism,” and “multiplicity,” and by relating his poetry to the work of Mallarmé (if not Apollinaire, whose influence he denied),



“Madrigales ideográficos” – José Juan Tablada (1915)



“Impresión de la Habana” – José Juan Tablada (1918)



“La calle donde vivo” – José Juan Tablada (1919)

Tablada demonstrates that he was not only versed in contemporary avant-garde visual poetry, but also with traditional Chinese poetry, perhaps being “the only ideographic (or ideogramatic) poet practicing at the beginning of the 20th century who was aware of the ideogram’s phonetic component,” according to Bohn, who adds that Tablada ultimately sought “to restore poetry to its original condition. By stripping poetry of its rhetorical and narrative functions [...] he hoped to create a style that was more suited to the new age.”¹³⁶ What the “new age” demanded was a new form of ideographic poetry that combined word, image, and sound.

After the twilight of the “historical” avant-garde, the (neo)vanguard movement of *concretismo* re(dis)covers ideography as an *other* form of writing. Believers in the revolutionary “vision” of Apollinaire, the Brazilian concrete poets were nonetheless critical of the “praxis” exhibited in the calligrams, whose pictorial designs were deemed both artificial and superficial, or even insignificant. Despite promoting the “first attempt to systematize and to theorize on the visually figurative poem,” according to Décio Pignatari, Apollinaire was said to be “a victim of the figurative preconception. Without ever having attempted the possibilities of a physiognomic configuration, he wanted to achieve some kind or other of pure ideogram, or pure figurative design, and he fell into meaningless decorativeness.”¹³⁷ Haroldo de Campos is likewise critical of the form the calligrams assumed, though he supports the conceptual formulation: “É bem verdade que o ‘caligrama’ de Apollinaire se perde na pictografia, exterior, imposta (no poema com forma de objetos, na figuração artificial à composição; mas sua formulação teórica [...] é fecunda e profética.”¹³⁸ Finally, Augusto de Campos accuses Apollinaire of “condemning” the ideogram to the “mere figurative representation of the theme.” In contrast to the poetry of Mallarmé and/or

Cummings, whose ideographic effects “emergem das palavras mesmas, partem de dentro para fora do poema,” in Apollinaire, “a estrutura é evidentemente imposta ao poema, exterior às palavras, que tomam a forma do recipiente mas não são alterados por ele.”¹³⁹ Such a coordinated response to the calligrams, despite the critical reproach, does not deny both the validity and the value of Apollinaire’s unprecedented attempt to employ ideographic modes of thinking and/or writing in modernist avant-garde poetry. Instead, the Noigandres poets basically question the significance of (trans)figuring the linear and discursive language of verse via the non-linear and non-discursive language of calligraphy. Apollinaire had intended to reproduce the effect of simultaneity via the immediate apprehension of images which would convey meaning to words that unfolded in space and time. The calligrams, as such, represent complex interrelations between visual overtones and verbal undertones that would ultimately prefigure the form(ul)ation of the “verbivocovisual” ideograms of concrete poetry.

A prolific individual poet and critic, Apollinaire is known for his associations with the avant-garde movements of Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. It has been noted, for instance, that the *Calligrammes*, organized into six sections that might as such correspond to the six sides of a cube, exhibit formal affinities with Cubism. Cubist techniques of (analytical) fragmentation and/or (synthetic) juxtaposition are apparent in both the “picture-poems” and the “conversation-poems,” verbal collages made from seemingly random pieces of spoken language presumably overheard in various urban settings. In addition to Cubism, there are also structural and thematic affinities with Futurism, whose similar preoccupation with multiplicity and simultaneity led to the formation and propagation of *parole in libertà* (“words-in-freedom”), which would revolutionize modernist poetry and/or poetics.

Incidentally, Apollinaire himself wrote “L’Antitradition futuriste: Manifeste = synthèse” (“Futurist Anti-tradition: Manifesto = Synthesis” – 1913), a manifesto that expresses an obviously Futurist sensibility. Commenting upon the experimental “Lettre-Océan” (“Ocean Letter”), an exceptional nonfigurative poem from the *Calligrammes* which expressly communicates a *topos* of writing in the modern world, the critic Gabriel Arbouin (rumored to be a pseudonym for Apollinaire himself) traces a progression from Futurist poetry to Apollinaire’s ideogram(s):

Je dis idéogramme parce que, après cette production, il ne fait plus de doute que certaines écritures modernes tendent à entrer dans l’idéographie. [...] Déjà, dans *Lacerba*, on avait pu voir des tentatives de ce genre par Soffici, Marinetti, Cangiullo, Jannelli, et aussi par Carrà, Boccioni, Bètuda, Binazzi, ces dernières moins définitives. Devant de pareilles productions, on restait encore indécis. Après la *Lettre-Océan*, il n’est plus possible de douter [...] Je répondrai que, dans la *Lettre-Océan*, ce qui s’impose et l’emporte c’est l’aspect typographique, précisément l’image, soit le dessin. Que cette image soit composée de fragments de langage parlé, il n’importe *psychologiquement*, car le lien entre ces fragments n’est plus celui de la logique grammaticale, mais celui d’une logique idéographique aboutissant à un ordre de disposition spatiale tout contraire à celui de la juxtaposition discursive [...] Donc, assurément pas narration, difficilement <poème.> Si l’on veut: poème idéographique.¹⁴⁰

In “Devant l’idéogramme d’Apollinaire” (1914), Arbouin (or Apollinaire) ultimately observes a “revolution” in the making: “parce qu’il faut que notre intelligence s’habitue à comprendre synthético-idéographiquement au lieu de analytico-discursivement.”¹⁴¹ Such a revolutionary “synthetic” and/or “ideographic” poetry would, in effect, display literary techniques that were also being developed in Futurism, a movement whose sensibility was based on a “perception by analogy” driven by the multiplicity of modern experience.¹⁴²

The Futurist “contribution” to the problematic(s) of concrete poetry is apparent in the telegraphic style of *words-in-freedom*, which are form(ulat)ed by means of analogy. In the influential “Manifeste technique de la littérature futuriste” (“Technical Manifesto of Futurist

LETTRE-OCÉAN

Je traverse la ville nez en avant
et je la coupe en 2

J'étais au bord du Rhin quand tu partis pour le Mexique
Ta voix me parvient malgré l'énorme distance
Gens de mauvaise mine sur le quai à la Vera Cruz

Juan Aldama

Correos
Mexico
4 centavos

U. S. Postage
2 cents 2

Les voyageurs de l'Espagne devant faire
le voyage de Coatzacoalcos pour s'embarquer
je t'envoie cette carte aujourd'hui au lieu

YPIRANGA

REPUBLICA MEXICANA
TARJETA POSTAL

11 45
29-5
14
Rue des Baignolles

de profiter du courrier de Vera Cruz qui n'est pas sûr
Tout est calme ici et nous sommes dans l'attente
des événements.

Vive la République
Hon le croquant
Des clefs j'en ai vu mille et mille
Zut pour M. Zun
Sur la rive gauche devant le pont d'Iéna
Arre les cochers
Vive le Roy
Eviva il Papa
bas A Jac La non si vous avez une mouche
les ca la ques c'é tait de li cieux fondes un journal
la gueule mon vieux pad
BONJOUR ANOMO ANORA TU NE CONNAITRAS JAMAIS BIEN LES
Mayas

T
S
F

"Lettre-océan" – Apollinaire (1918)

BONJOUR MON FRÈRE ALBERT à Mexico

Tous
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tenant
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ture les voyageurs pour Chatou

GRAMOPHONES

Chirimoya

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cré
cré me
fer
cré rls
cré fleu

SIRÈNES

Hou	
Hou	Haute
Hou	de
	300
	mètres

SIRÈNES

Hou

Haute ou
de ou
300
mètres

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A la Crème à

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Literature” – 1912) and the accompanying supplement, F. T. Marinetti advocated the destruction of conventional syntax and the creation of analogical relations between nouns and/or between verbs (in the infinitive) not qualified by adjectives and/or adverbs. Such interrelations would effectively forge (s)elective “affinities” between otherwise disparate things and/or images. Exploring an “ever greater gradation of analogies, affinities ever deeper and more solid, however remote,” Marinetti passionately declares analogy to be “the deep love that binds together remote, seemingly diverse and hostile things. The life of matter can be embraced only by an orchestral style, at once polychromatic, polyphonic, and polymorphous, by means of the most extensive analogies.”¹⁴³ The multiplicity of colors, sounds, and/or forms of such an “orchestral” style would thus correspond to the vivacity of the material world. At the basis of Marinetti’s proposition(s) is a (sur)real belief that “the vaster their affinities, the more images will retain their power to astound.”¹⁴⁴ An “ideal poetry,” for Marinetti, would ultimately be constituted by the “uninterrupted flow of the second terms of analogies,” or in other words, “the illogical succession, no longer explanatory but intuitive, of the second terms of many different analogies which are all disconnected and quite often opposed to one another.”¹⁴⁵ In order to represent such analogies in writing, Futurist innovations would include the use of mathematical signs and musical notations to produce quantitative relations, thereby freeing words from punctuation. Furthermore, blank spaces would indicate pauses and capital letters would designate dominant analogies. At the conclusion of the supplement to the “technical” manifesto on Futurist literature, Marinetti provides, as an example of such “elastic intuitions,” a “significant fragment” from his “new Futurist work,” “Bataille: Poids + Odeur” (“Battle: Weight + Smell” – 1912), which is clearly marked by technical innovations:

BATAILLE

POIDS + ODEUR

Midi 3/4 flûtes glapissement embrasement toumbtoub alarme Gargaresch craquement crépitation marche Cliquetis sacs fusils sabots clous canons crinières roues caissons juifs beignets pains-à-huile cantilènes échoppes bouffées chatollement chassie puanteur cannelle fadeurs flux reflux poivre rixe

— vermine tourbillon orangers-en-fleur filigrane misère dés échecs cartes jasmin
+ muscade + rose arabesque mosaïque charogne hérissément
savates mitrailleuses = galets + ressac + grenouilles Cliquetis sacs fusils
canons ferraille atmosphère = plomb + lave + 300 puanteurs + 50 parfums
pavé-matelas détritux crottin charognes fic-flac entassement chameaux bourricots tohubohu cloaque Souk-des-argentiers dédale soie azur

galabieh pourpre oranges moucharabieh arches enjambement bifurcation placette pullulement tannerie cireurs gandouras burnous grouillement couler suinter bariolage enveloppement excroissances fissures tanières gravats démolition acide-phénique chaux pouillerie Cliquetis sacs fusils sabots clous canons

— caissons coups-de-fouet drap-de-soldat suint impasse à-gauche entonnoir à-droite carrefour clairobscur étuves fritures musc jonquilles fleur-d'oranger ecœurement essence-de-rose-piège ammoniacque griffes excréments-morsures viande + 1000 mouches fruits-secs carroubes pois-chiches pistaches amandes régimes-bananes dattes toumbtoub bouc cousscouss-moisi aromates safran goudron

— œuf-pourri chien-mouillé jasmin cassie santal œillets faisandage intensité bouillonnement fermenter tubéreuse Pourrir s'éparpiller furie mourir sedésagrégier morceaux miettes poussière héroïsme elminthes fusillade pic pac pun pan pan menthe mandarine laine-fauve mitrailleuses-cliquets-de-bois-léproserie plaies en-avant chair-moite crasse suavité éther Cliquetis sacs fusils

— canons caissons roues benjoin tabac encens anis village ruines brûlé ambre jasmin maisons-éventrements abandon gargoulette toumbtoub violettes ombrages puits anon ânesse cadavre-écrabouillement-sexe-exhibition ail bromes anisette brise poisson sapin-neuf romarin charcuteries palmiers sable cannelle Soleil or balance plateaux plomb ciel soie

— chaleur rembourrage pourpre azur torréfaction Soleil = volcan + 3000 drapeaux atmosphère-précision corrida furie chirurgie lampes rayons-bistouris étincellement-linges désert-clinique X 20000 bras 20000 pieds 10000 yeux-mire scintillation attente opération sables-chaufferies Italiens Arabes : — 4000 mètres bataillons-chaudières commandements-pistons sueur bouches four-

“Bataille: Poids + Odeur” (“Battle: Weight + Smell”) – F.T. Marinetti (1912)

naises crénomdenom en-avant huile vapeur ammoniacque > cassies violettes
 fientes roses miroitement tout marcher arithmétique traces obéir ironie
 enthousiasme bourdonnement coudre dunes-oreillers zigzags reprendre
 pieds-meules-crissement sable inutilité mitrailleuses = galets + ressac + gre-
 nouilles Avant-gardes : 200 mètres chargez-à-la-baïonnette en-avant
 Artères gonflement chaleur fermentation-cheveux-aisselles-chignon-rousseur blon-
 deur haleines - sac 30 kilos prudence = bascule ferrailles tire-lire mollesse ;
 8 frissons commandements-pierres rage ennemi-aimant légèreté gloire
 héroïsme Avant-gardes : 100 mètres mitrailleuses fusillade éruption
 violons cuivre pim poum pac pac tim tout mitrailleuses tatarataratarata
 Avant-gardes : 20 mètres bataillons-fourmis cavalerie-araignées
 routes-gués général-îlot estafettes-sauterelles sables-révolution obus-tribuns nua-
 ges-grils fusils-martyrs shrapnels-auréoles multiplication addition division obus-
 soustraction grenade-rature ruisseler couler éboulement blocs avalanche
 Avant-gardes : 3 mètres mélange va-et-vient collage décollage
 déchirement feu déraciner chantiers éboulement carrières incendie panique
 aveuglement écraser entrer sortir courir éclaboussement Vies-fusées
 cœurs-friandises baïonnettes-fourchettes mordre dépêcher puer valser bondir
 rage curée explosions obus-gymnastes fracas-trapèzes explosion rose joie
 ventres-arrosoirs têtes-foot-ball éparpillement Canon-149 éléphant
 artilleurs-cornacs hissa-hoo colère leviers lenteur lourdeur centre gargousse-
 jockey méthode monotonie trainers distance grand-prix gueule parabole x
 lumière tonnerre massue infini Mer = dentelles-émeraudes-fraîcheur-élasticité
 -abandon mollesse cuirassés-acier-concision-ordre Drapeau-de-combat-(prairies
 ciel-blanc-de-chaleur sang) = Italie force orgueil-italien frères femmes mère
 insomnie brouhaha-de-camelots gloire domination cafés récits-de-guerre
 Tours canons-virilité-volées érection télémètre extase toumbtoumb 3
 secondes toumb-toumb flots sourires rires plaff plouff glouglouglouglon cache-
 cache cristaux vierges chair bijoux perles iodes sels bromes jupons gaz
 liqueurs bulles 3 secondes toumbtoumb officier blancheur télémètre
 croix feu mégaphone la-hausse-à-4-mille-mètres tous-les-hommes-à-gauche assez
 chacun-à-son-poste inclinaison-7-dégrés érection splendeur jet percer immensité
 azur-femelle dépucelage acharnement couloirs cris labyrinthe
 matelas sanglots défoncement désert lit précision télémètre monoplane poulailler-
 de-théâtre applaudissements monoplane = balcon-rose-roue-tambour
 trépan-taon > dérouté arabes bœufs sanguinolence abattoir blessures refuge
 oasis humidité éventail fraîcheur sieste rampement germination effort
 dilatation-végétale je-serai-plus-vert-demain restons-mouillés conserve-cette-goutte-
 d'eau faut-grimper-3-centimètres-en-6-jours colle-ta-tige-pour-résister-contre-20-gram-
 mes-de-sable-et-3000-grammes-de-ténèbres voie-lactée-cocotier étoiles-noix-de-coco
 lait ruisseler jus délices

F. T. Marinetti.

MILAN, 11 Août 1912.

DIRECTION DU MOUVEMENT FUTURISTE: Corso Venezia, 61 - MILAN

“Bataille: Poids + Odeur” (“Battle: Weight + Smell”) – F.T. Marinetti (1912)

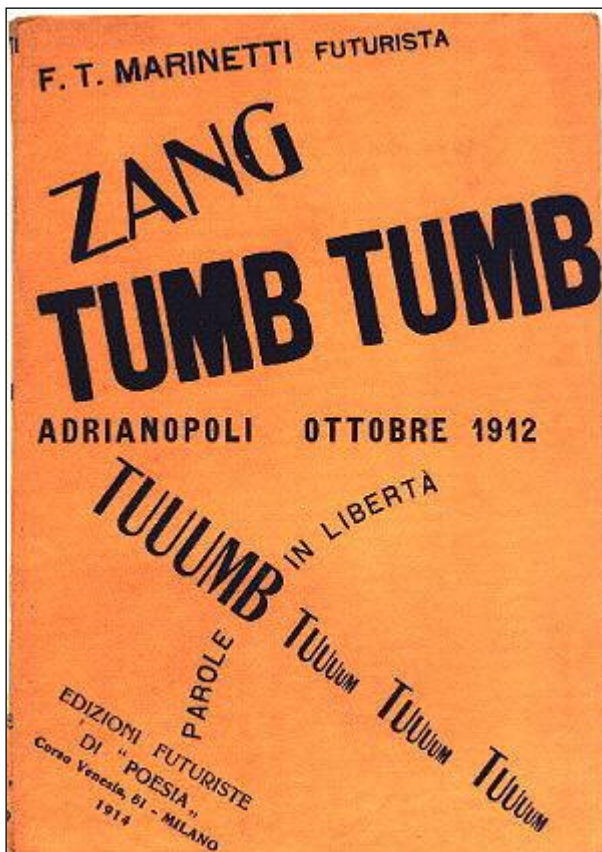
The dynamic array of new techniques proposed in Futurist literature is further elaborated in “Distruzione della sintassi – Immaginazione senza fili – Parole in libertà” (“Destruction of Syntax – Imagination without Strings – Words-in-Freedom” – 1913), a subsequent manifesto that synthesizes the telegraphic poetics of the movement. In order to exhibit the so-called “analogical ground of life,” Marinetti proposes “words-in-freedom” as the medium of an “imagination without strings,” defined as “the absolute freedom of images or analogies, expressed with disconnected words, and without the connecting syntactical wires and without punctuation.”¹⁴⁶ Futurist writing would thereby come to formulate analogical relations not only between words (or images) but also between the word and the world. For instance, the “typographical revolution” which promoted the use of various fonts, italics, boldface type, and a “multicolored variety” of letters in order to “double the expressive force of words” was also notable for its mimetic character, as words and letters effectively imitated the dynamism of things and/or actions. Accordingly, a “multilinear lyricism” was conceived in order to reproduce the effect of “simultaneity” by means of parallel lines of “chains of colors, sounds, odors, noises, weights, densities, analogies.” There is also analogy between written script and the spoken word (or speech) in the “free expressive orthography” that proclaims the freedom “to deform and reshape words, cutting them, lengthening them, reinforcing their centers or their extremities, increasing or diminishing the number of vowels and consonants.”¹⁴⁷ Such an “orthographic” style is express(ive)ly related to onomatopoeia, a technique that was likewise employed in order to transcribe the multiplicity of sounds and/or noises of the modern world. In sum, the techniques outlined by Marinetti in his manifestos are evident both in his own artist-book *Zang Tumb Tuuum* (1914) and in poster-poems such as “Après la Marne, Joffre visita le front

en auto” (“After the Marne, Joffre Visited the Front by Car” – 1915) and “Une assemblée tumultueuse. Sensibilité numérique” (“A Tumultuous Assembly. Numerical Sensibility” – 1919). Futurist literature would, as such, introduce a number of innovations that, in some form or other, evoke both the materiality of the word as script and the verbal-acoustic-visual dimensions of language as writing. A concrete poetry, with its visual and/or “analogical syntax,” would therefore be a consequence of the “destruction of syntax,” “imagination without strings,” and “words-in-freedom” of Futurism, which (pro)posed a series of “problems” and/or “contributions” that radically transformed the future of poetry and/or poetics.

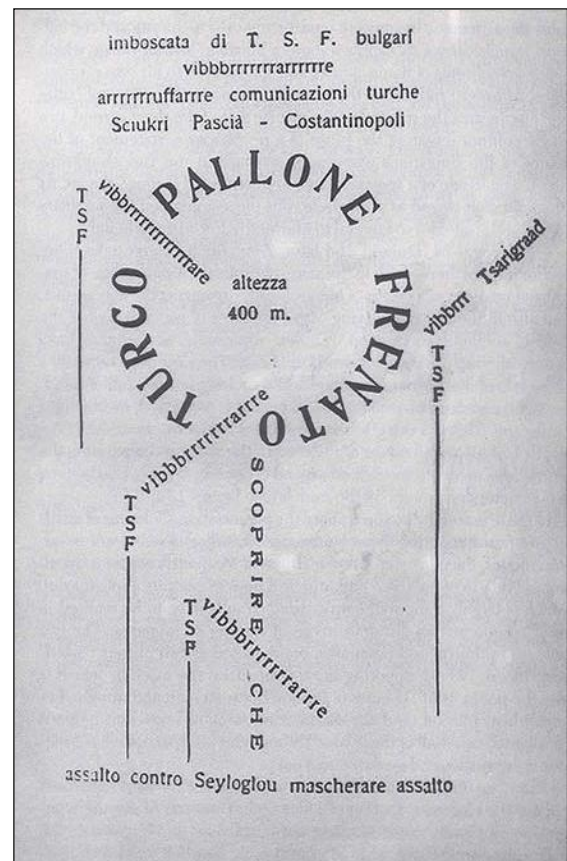
The revolutionary avant-garde movement of Futurism, which featured interrelated developments in art, music, and literature, was conceived as a “sensitivity” as much as an aesthetics and/or poetics. Such a “sensitivity” consisted of an acute awareness of modern technological developments and of the corresponding effects on human consciousness. According to Marinetti:

Futurism is based on the complete renewal of human sensibility which has been brought about as an effect of science’s great discoveries. Those people who today make use of the telegraph, the telephone, the gramophone, the train, the bicycle, the motorcycle, the automobile, the ocean liner, the dirigible, the airplane, the cinema, the great newspaper (the synthesis of a day in the world’s life) are not aware of the decisive influence that these various forms of communication, transportation, and information have on their psyches.¹⁴⁸

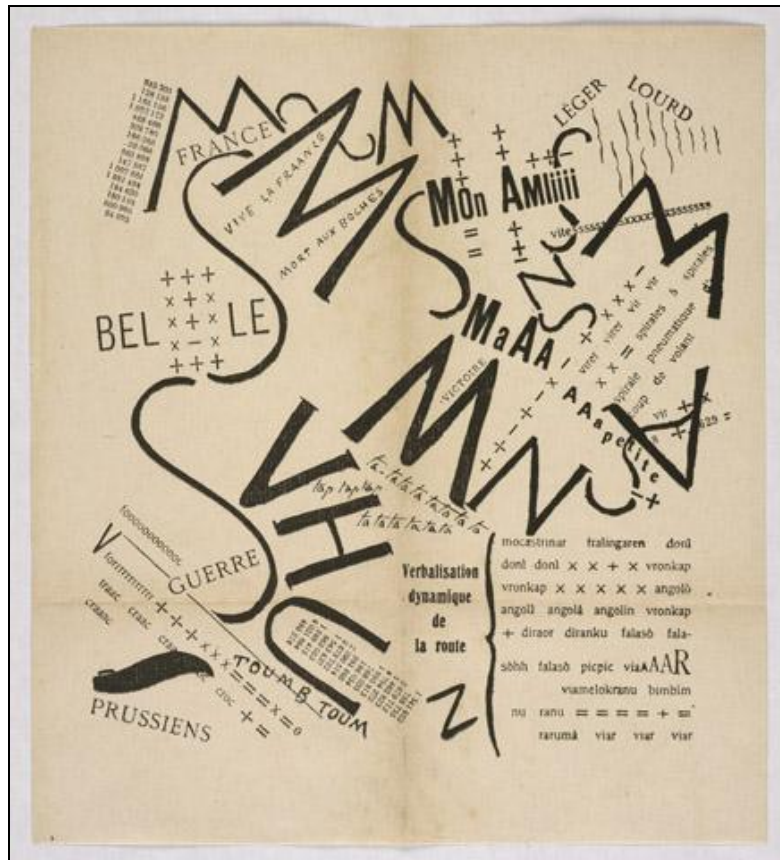
Marinetti adds that this “new Futurist sensibility” generated the “pictorial dynamism,” the “antigraceful music” or “art of noises,” and the “words-in-freedom” that characterize the overall production of the movement.¹⁴⁹ It is arguably such a renewed sensibility that is re(dis)covered in the (neo)vanguard movement of *concretismo*, which also featured interrelated developments in art, music, and poetry that were, in part, generated by advances



cover of *Zang Tumb Tuuum* – Marinetti (1914)



page from *Zang Tumb Tuuum* – Marinetti (1914)



“Après la Marne” – Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1915)



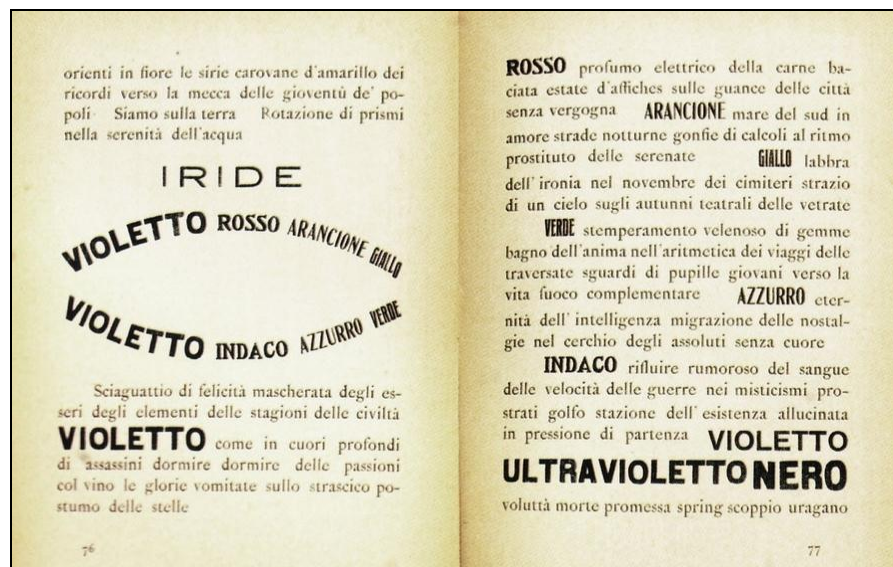
“Une assemblée tumultueuse. Sensibilité numérique” – Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1919)

in technology. In effect, the dynamic movement in concrete art exhibits traces of the “*force-lines*” of Futurist painters such as Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Gino Severini, and Luigi Russolo. On a similar note, the recorded and/or synthesized sounds of concrete/electronic music contain echoes of the mechanical “noise-sounds” of Futurist composers such as the multifaceted Russolo. Finally, the ideographic *words-in-relation* of concrete poetry, in a sense, evolved from the telegraphic “words-in-freedom” of Futurist poets such as Marinetti and Ardengo Soffici. In sum, the (syn)aesthetics of Futurism was absolutely fundamental for the development of concrete poetry, despite the critical reservations leveled against the movement by the Noigandres poets, who decried the lack of objectivity and organization in a form of writing that was expressive but not “constructive.” For Haroldo de Campos, “a cinemática descritiva dos futuristas, o freneticismo subjetivista, o ultra-romantismo hipostasiado na máquina que os caracteriza impediram que, em suas composições, prevalecesse um mínimo de organização construtiva.”¹⁵⁰ In response to a collection of typographical poems by Soffici, *BİF\$ZF+18 simultaneità e chimismi lirici* (*A\$Lot+18 Simultaneity and Lyrical Chemistry* – 1915), Haroldo de Campos particularly observes that “letras e símbolos tipográficos, algarismos, etc. servem de mero ‘décor’ à apresentação de estrofes de andadura tradicional, dispostas assimetricamente.”¹⁵¹ Such a critique recalls the case made against Apollinaire, who was also accused of “decorativeness.” Ultimately, the “contributions” of Futurism to concrete poetry is aptly summarized by Augusto de Campos as a “presentiment” of a future “poetic renovation:”

E será possível discenir na “imaginação sem fios,” nas “palavras em liberdade,” na drástica condenação do adjetivo, algo assim como o pressentimento olfativo de uma renovação poética que eles, futuristas, não chegariam a cristalizar, mas para a qual não deixariam de contribuir bastante, e até certo ponto, mais do que bastante: com sua própria imolação.¹⁵²



Cover for *BIF&ZF+18 simultaneità e chimismi lirici* – Ardengo Soffici (1915)



Excerpt from *BIF&ZF+18 simultaneità e chimismi lirici* – Ardengo Soffici (1915)

A renewal or “renovation” of poetry therefore occurred with the rapid rise and demise of Futurism, which incidentally had pronounced the “death” of free verse long before concrete poetry announced an end (or closure) to “the historical cycle of verse.”¹⁵³

In terms of its “contributions to the life of the problem” of concrete poetry, the so-called “process of total light” displayed by Futurism was complemented by the so-called “blackout of history” exhibited by Dadaism.¹⁵⁴ If the former presented a revolutionary aesthetics in the form of a new art, the latter constituted a subversive revolt in the form of an anti-art based on critical appropriation and free association. In his “Dada Manifesto” (1918), Tristan Tzara declares independence from the “laboratories of formal ideas” that characterized both Cubism and Futurism, opting instead for an irrational anarchism and a nonsensical chaos that would be developed in various techniques such as the assemblage, collage, photomontage, typography, and ready-mades. Dadaism would draw inspiration and/or material from popular culture, though it would explore and/or exploit such (re)sources in a transgressive fashion. With polemical anti-art works that, in a sense, made the useful useless and *vice versa*, Dadaism represented a cynical parody of modern life in a war-torn world. The nihilistic anti-poetics of what was initially a literary movement would be promoted almost as a name-brand of sorts: “Dada is the signboard of abstraction; advertising and business are also elements of poetry.”¹⁵⁵ Tristan Tzara, one of the principal founders of the Dada movement, accordingly created abstract poem-collages of random words cut out from newspapers and magazines in an attempt to disassemble and in turn reassemble contemporary discourse(s). In his “Dada Manifesto on Feeble Love & Bitter Love” (1918), Tzara’s recipe to make a (Dadaist) poem thereby becomes:

Take a newspaper.
Take a pair of scissors.

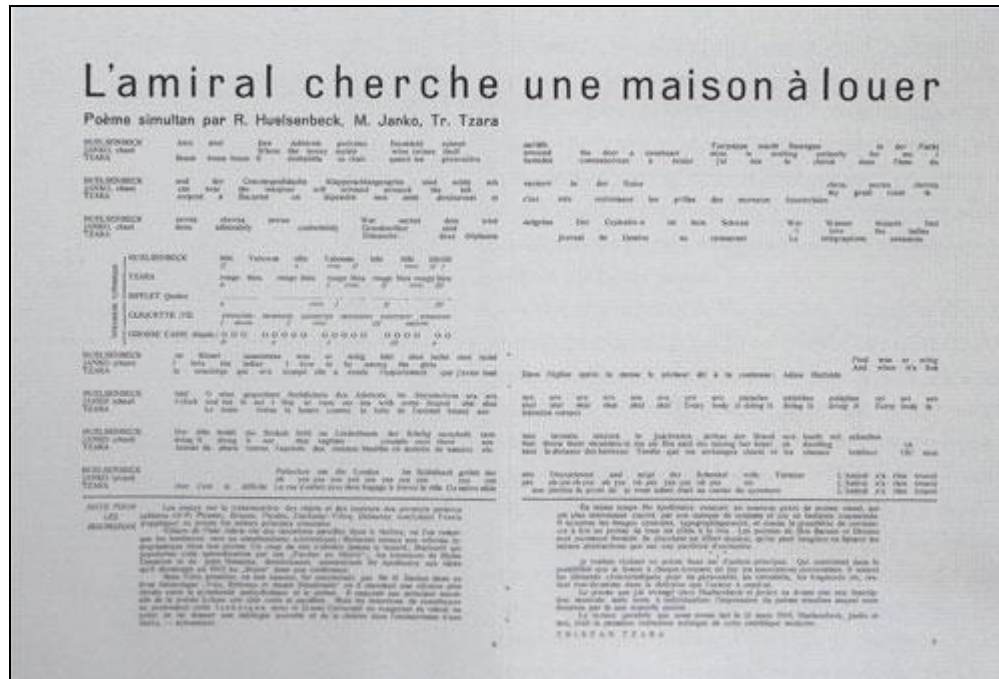
Choose an article as long as you are planning to make your poem.
Cut out the article.
Then cut out each of the words that make up this article and put them in a bag.
Shake it gently.
Then take out the scraps one after the other in the order in which they left the bag.
Copy conscientiously.
The poem will be like you.
And here you are a writer, infinitely original and endowed with a sensibility that is charming though beyond the understanding of the vulgar.¹⁵⁶

Despite his declaration of independence, in *Note pour les bourgeois* (“Note for the Bourgeoisie” – 1916) Tzara associates the simultaneous poem “L’Amirale cherche une maison à louer” (“The Admiral in Search of a House to Rent” – 1916) with related experiments in Cubism and Futurism, in addition to the innovations of Mallarmé and Apollinaire. According to Haroldo de Campos, the Dadaist poet nonetheless rejects any notion of organization or “coherent structure.”

Os versetos produzem um livre associanismo, sem qualquer inter-relação direta: o espaçamento das palavras em cada verseto permite, verticalmente, outros jogos arbitrários de associações: nada mais, nada menos do que o “automismo psíquico” sistematizado depois, sem o mesmo gosto lúdico e inventivo, pelos surrealistas capitaneados por Breton.¹⁵⁷

Such a poetic assemblage explores the laws of chance, a favorite pastime of fellow Dadaists who also dabbled with what would become a Surrealist technique of automatic writing. Other significant examples of abstraction in Dadaist poetry include the senseless cadences of sound poetry, such as the (in)famous “Karawane” (1916) by Hugo Ball, and especially the “consistent” poetry proposed by the German artist Kurt Schwitters, who would argue that the letter, not the word, is the fundamental element of poetry. The Dadaist “contribution” to the “problem” of concrete poetry would therefore be the development of an abstract poetry.

In the manifesto “Consistent Poetry” (1924), Schwitters begins by declaring: “Not the word but the letter is the original material of poetry.”¹⁵⁸ The Berlin Dadaist subsequently



“L’Amirale cherche une maison à louer” – Richard Huelsebeck, Marcel Janko, Tristan Tzara (1916)

KARAWANE
jolifanto bambla ô falli bambla
grossiga m'pfa habla horem
égiga goramen
higo bloiko russula huju
hollaka hollala
anlogo bung
blago bung
blago bung
bossos fataka
u uu u
schampa wulla wussa ólobo
hej tatta gôrem
eschige zunbada
wulubu ssubudu uluw ssubudu
tumba ba- umf
kusagauma
ba - umf

“Karawane” – Hugo Ball (1916)

explains that, inasmuch as classical poetry was preoccupied with the association of ideas and/or poetic sentiments: “Abstract poetry separated – and therein lies its great merit – the word from its associations, and played off word against word; more particularly concept against concept, while taking sound into account.”¹⁵⁹ An abstract poetry, as such, undermined the denotative capacity of the word, freeing it from merely referential functions in order to become an object in itself. Nonetheless, abstract poetry was apparently “not yet consistent enough” for Schwitters, who believed that concepts were more effectively “played off against each other” through the use of real objects by Dadaist painters.¹⁶⁰ By extension, sound poetry, which arguably eschewed meaning or sense altogether, could only be “consistent” when “created in public performance and not written down.”¹⁶¹ Schwitters thus draws a distinction between writing and reading poetry, the latter of which placed emphasis on the performance over the transcription of the word. The oft (re)cited sound poem *Ursonate* (“Primordial Sonata” 1922–32), despite its eventual notation, exemplifies the principles of such a “consistent poetry,” which is ultimately defined in terms of its constructive interrelations:

Consistent poetry is constructed from letters. Letters have no concepts. Letters in themselves have no sound, they only offer the possibility to be given sound values by the performer. The consistent poem plays off letters and groups of letters against each other.¹⁶²

Previewing the “relational syntax” of concrete poetry, the “consistent poetry” of Schwitters was developed as part of his anti-Dada movement called Merz, whose name is aptly appropriated, in *dadaesque* fashion, from an advertisement for Kommerz und Privatbank (“Commercial and Private Bank”). According to the “Merz” (1920) manifesto, the word “Merz,” like “Dada,” had no particular meaning when it was formed, and the meaning it was given “changes with the change in the insight of those who work with it.”¹⁶³

einleitung:

Fümms bö wō tää zää Uu,
pögiff,
kwii Ee.

Ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo,

dll rrrrr beeeee bö, (A)
dll rrrrr beeeee bö fümms bö,
rrrrr beeeee bö fümms bö wō,
beeeee bö fümms bö wō tää,
bö fümms bö wō tää zää,
fümms bö wō tää zää Uu:

erster teil:

thema 1:
Fümms bö wō tää zää Uu,
pögiff,
kwii Ee.

thema 2:
Dedesnn nn rrrrr,
li Ee,
mpiff tillff too,
tillll,
Jüü Kaa? (gesungen)

thema 3:
Rinnzekete bee bee nnz krr müü?
ziuu ennze, ziiuu rinnzkrmmüü,
rakete bee bee.

thema 4:
Rrumpff tillff toooo?

Fragment from *Ursonate* – Kurt Schwitters (1932)

Dedesnn nn rrrrr,
li Ee,
mpiff tillff toooo:

Dedesnn nn rrrrr
desnn nn rrrrr
nn na rrrrr
na rrrrr

liiii
Eeeeee
m
mpe
mpff
mpiffte
mpiff tilll
mpiff tillff
mpiff tillff toooo,
Dedesnn nn rrrrr, li Ee, mpiff tillff toooo,
Dedesnn nn rrrrr, li Ee, mpiff tillff toooo, tillll
Dedesnn nn rrrrr, li Ee, mpiff tillff toooo, tillll. Jüü-Kaa?
(gesungen).

Fümms bö wō tää zää Uu, pögiff, kwii Ee.
Dedesnn nn rrrrr, li Ee, mpiff tillff toooo, tillll. Jüü-Kaa.
(gesungen)

Rinnzekete bee bee nnz krr müüü, ziiuu ennze ziiuu
rinnzkrmmüüü.
Rakete bee bee.

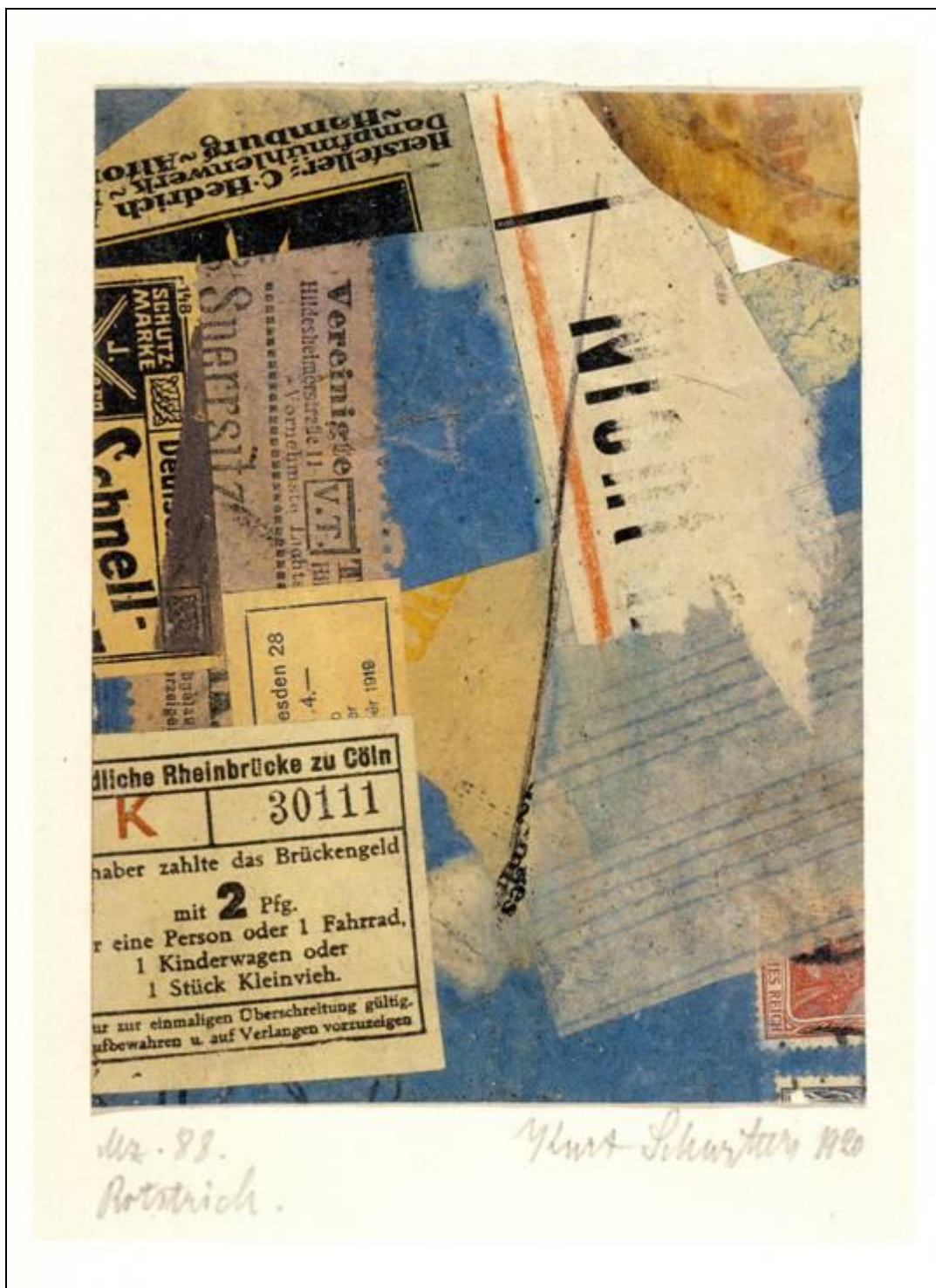
Zikete bee bee
Rinnzekete bee bee
Rakete bee bee
Zikete bee bee ennze
Rinnzekete bee bee ennze
Rakete bee bee ennze
Zikete bee bee nnz krr
Rinnzekete bee bee nnz krr
Rakete bee bee nnz krr

Fragment from *Ursonate* – Kurt Schwitters (1932)

For Schwitters, “Merz stands for freedom from all fetters, for the sake of artistic creation.”¹⁶⁴ Unlike in Dada, freedom in Merz works “is not lack of restraint, but the product of strict artistic discipline.”¹⁶⁵ Although primarily a visual artist, Schwitters himself was a multitalented individual who produced works in various genres, such as painting, poetry, sculpture, and even architecture. For Schwitters, the “medium” of his art was “unimportant,” only “the forming” was “essential.”¹⁶⁶ In his Merz compositions, the “mode of creation” is, in some form or other, to “play off material against material,” or to form interrelations among materials. Schwitters describes his aesthetics in terms of a poetics of “interaction” that, in a sense, would “play off” Merz *against* Dada:

At first I concerned myself with other art forms, poetry for example. Elements of poetry are letters, syllables, words, sentences. Poetry arises from the interaction of these elements. Meaning is important only if it is employed as one such factor. I play off sense against nonsense. I prefer nonsense but that is a purely personal matter. I feel sorry for nonsense, because up to now it has so seldom been artistically molded, that is why I love nonsense.¹⁶⁷

Although Merz, like Dada, “cultivates nonsense,” Schwitters distinguishes the Zürich Dadaists led by Tzara from the Berlin Dadaists led by Huelsenbeck, accepting the “abstract” art of the former and rejecting the “*kitsch*” art of the latter. For his part, Schwitters asserts that his goal was to create the “Merz composite art work,” which would (con)fuse the different genres by including “all branches of art in an artistic unit.”¹⁶⁸ According to Schwitters: “First I combined individual categories of art. I pasted words and sentences into poems in such a way as to produce a rhythmic design. Reversing the process, I pasted up pictures and drawings so that sentences could be read in them.”¹⁶⁹ If the purpose for the “composite Merz work of art” was ultimately “to efface the boundaries between the arts,” it becomes apparent that analogous techniques are at work, or at *play*, in both the visual and verbal collages, which are conceived as related forms of aesthetic and/or poetic expression.



Merz 88. Rostrich (Red Stroke) – Kurt Schwitters (1920)

In “Kurt Schwitters ou o Júbilo do Objeto,” Haroldo de Campos remarks upon Schwitters’ incursions in the area of “poetic invention:”

O despejo linguístico – esse amontoado residual de frases feitas, locuções dessoradas, ecos memorizados de anúncios, citações, convenções sentimentais, expressões de etiqueta, lugares comuns coloquiais etc., – também assumia o aspecto de um material a ser reencontrado e devolvido ao mundo novo do poema.¹⁷⁰

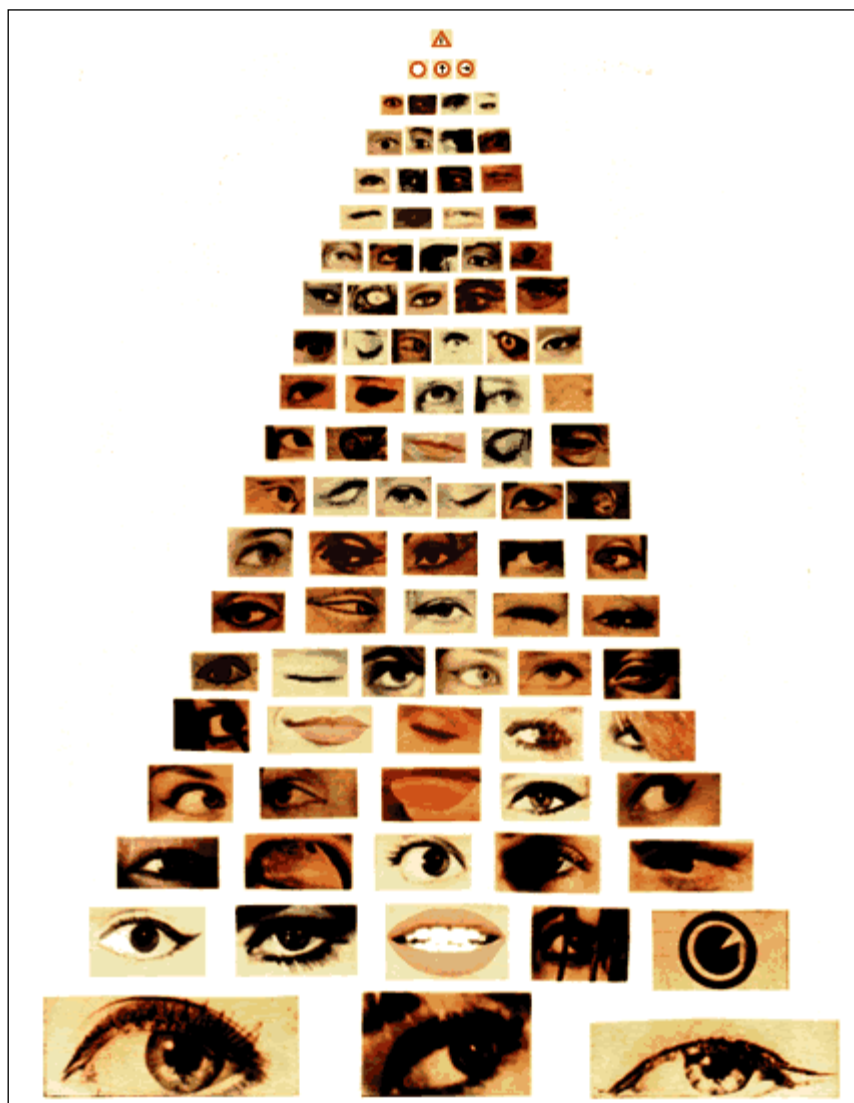
There are, therefore, “zonas de contato e permeabilidade entre as *collages* visuais de Schwitters e suas *collages* verbais,” according to Campos, who furthermore observes:

Schwitters, pintor, era também o poeta preocupado com a invenção tipográfica, com a desarticulação da palavra, com o aspecto visual dos vocábulos, suas possíveis disposições no horizontal espacial e suas reações e transformações recíprocas quando postos em presença simultânea.¹⁷¹

With the experimental typography, fragmentation and synthesis, spatial and relational syntax of Merz compositions, Schwitters’ art is appreciated for its implicitly formal and/or constructivist tendencies. Campos ultimately draws connections with Neo-Plasticism and Mondrian, reads correspondences with Joyce and Cummings, and notes affinities with Futurist and concrete/electronic music, before finally situating Schwitters in the Poundian *paideuma* of the Noigandres poets.¹⁷² Although the Merz composite work of art was never fully realized as such, Schwitters’ abstract verbal, vocal, and visual compositions would have a constructive impact on the development of concrete poetry.

Merz visual collages are structurally related to works that exhibit the influential technique of photomontage, a version of which was invented by Schwitters’ compatriot Raoul Hausmann, the renowned “Dadasoph” who likewise experimented with typography and sound poetry. A variation of collage, photomontage constitutes a selective appropriation of images and text from a variety of media that are assembled into a composition that both implicitly and explicitly critiques contemporary society and popular culture, in addition to

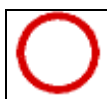
the art world, via satire and allusion. Although Dadaist photomontage was subsequently appropriated by the Surrealists, the Russian Constructivists also utilized the technique for an aesthetic and political agenda. Such divergent tendencies would nonetheless intersect in the so-called Neo-Dada “Pop Art” movement of the 1960s, in the context of a neo-avant-garde. At the same time, Augusto de Campos composed his *popcretos* (1964-1966), a series of “expoems” which were “collected and selected” by chance and modeled after the Dada ready-mades, albeit in “concrete” fashion.¹⁷³ In his own introduction to the series, Campos presents the *popcretos* as examples of “pop in concrete parameters: construction, critical intention.”¹⁷⁴ As such, the series is constituted by both verbal and visual collages formed from random cut-outs of text and images assembled in order to form a (de)constructive design with a more readily “engaged” message. Brazilian concrete poetry had recently entered its expressly social phase, making a “participatory leap” into cultural and political discourses. Such a move was evidenced by the attachment of a postscript by Russian Futurist poet Vladimir Mayakovsky to the “pilot-plan for concrete poetry” in 1961: “without revolutionary form there is no revolutionary art.” The “revolutionary” poetics is apparent in the iconic “olho por olho” (“eye for an eye” – 1964), a composition from the *popcretos* series that utilizes the technique of photomontage in order to make a socio-political critique. According to Campos, the series of eyes (and mouths) were taken from “revistas re-vistas” (“re-viewed magazines”) and include photos and/or images of movie stars, politicians, poets, a black panther, fellow concrete poet Décio Pignatari, the legendary soccer player Pelé, the 19th century Brazilian poet Sousândrade, birds, pharaohs, a washing machine, and traffic signs. A visible “Babel of eyes,” the reference to the barbaric Babylonian code reveals both its formal structure and its thematic content. “Olho por olho” revolutionizes established



“olho por olho” – Augusto de Campos (1964)



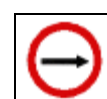
perigo
 (“danger”)



trânsito proibido
 (“traffic prohibited”)



segue em frente
 (“continue straight ahead”)



sentido obrigatório
 (“one way”)

poetic conventions by presenting an ex-poem without words, as images assume a semantic function in order to communicate meaning via a visual (or *graphic*) language that is paradoxically inarticulate. The pyramidal shape of the composition complements the biblical allusion by constructing a virtual tower of *babble*. The actual selection of images is likewise significant, with its allusions to historical and contemporary figures and/or symbols that are in the public “eye.” At the pinnacle of such a representative *New World Order*, which might as such represent the *all-seeing-eye(s)* of the (new) media, are signs that subtly yet incisively refer to the dire political situation of Brazil after a military *coup d’etat*. In *other* words: the “Left” being expressly prohibited, the only possibilities are to continue straight ahead and/or to turn “Right,” all of which ultimately signify “danger.” With its various cultural and political allusions, “olho por olho” becomes, in a sense, a critique of the new rule of law via a new form of code: an *eye for an eye*. Augusto de Campos’ *popcretos* series thus marked the form(ul)ation of a radical politics via a revolutionary poetics that would challenge not only the military regime, but also the *rule of the letter* in literature.

By appropriating the technique(s) of visual and/or verbal collage, Augusto de Campos displays affinities with the constructivist tendencies of Dadaist artists such as Schwitters, Hausmann, and Hannah Höch, whose “Der Strauß” (“The Ostrich” – 1929/1965) is (co)incidentally composed of random images of cut-out eyes that form a figurative pattern. The constructive “contributions” of Dadaism to the “problem” of concrete poetry not only consisted of formal techniques, however, but also of rhetorical practices. Although the Noigandres poets would strategically minimize the influence of both Futurism and Dadaism, manifestos of concrete poetry actually mimicked the polemics of such avant-garde movements, which would revolutionize the world of art both in Europe and the Americas.



“Der Strauß” – Hannah Höch (1929/1965)

Inasmuch as concrete poetry reenacts a theory and praxis of (cultural) cannibalism, it also has roots in the primitivism that represents the *other* side of Modernism. The Noigandres poets were inspired not only by the haiku-like “pills” of poetry of Oswald de Andrade but also by the prescriptions of his “Manifesto Antropófago,” which would even appear to anticipate the movement(s) of concretism: “We are concretists. Ideas take hold, react, burn people in public squares. Let us suppress ideas and other paralyses. For routes. To believe in signs, to believe in instruments and stars.”¹⁷⁵ Envisaging the constellations of concrete poetry, and reflecting the (de)signs of transculturation, *antropofagia* itself becomes an (ab)original form of critical appropriation and original transformation that, in effect, dis-credits the Latin American debt to European modernism and/or the avant-garde by charging *an eye for an eye*.

concretism & the neo-avant-garde

The emergence of *concretismo* represents not only a transcultural dialogue with (neo)vanguard developments in contemporary art and music, but also a critical (re)vision of Modernism and the “historical” avant-garde. The synchronicity of concrete poetry with both concrete art and concrete/electronic music is therefore complemented by the synchronicity of a poetic anti-tradition that has been trans-formed by an ex-centric perspective of *difference* and/or *otherness*. In “The Rule of Anthropophagy: Europe Under the Sign of Devoration,” Haroldo de Campos would recognize, in the allegorical style of the Baroque, a “universal” code founded on “difference.” As such, the (non) origin of Latin American literature was formulated as “a double speech of the other as difference: to speak a code of otherness and to speak it in a state of otherness.”¹⁷⁶ Under the sign of transculturation, the New World

established a “rule of anthropophagy” that deconstructs a Eurocentric logocentrism via the (r)evolution of an *alternative* anti-tradition that originates in the Baroque and culminates in the so-called “neo-baroque” manifestations of an *other* (neo) avant-garde. With the international propagation of Modernism and the avant-garde, and the intersemiotic development(s) of “concrete” art, music, and poetry, an “alternating current” of Latin American writers would once more enunciate “the difference in the gaps of a universal code.”

Concrete poetry represents Brazilian literature’s moment of absolute synchrony. It not only can speak the difference in a universal code [...] Metalinguistically, it rethinks its own code, the poetic function itself (or the operation of this code). With Concrete Poetry, the difference (the national) came to the operating space of the new synthesis of the universal code. More than a heritage of poets, this is the case of assuming, criticizing and “chewing over” a poetics.¹⁷⁷

In *other* words, the (colonial) “difference” becomes a cornerstone for the de-construction of a new “universal” poetics. An “anthropophagic reason” furthermore invokes (cultural) cannibalism as a mode of critical appropriation and original transformation of an international “heritage” of poetry. The critical response to a European tradition by a Latin American anti-tradition becomes a dialogue of revolt against modern, neo-colonial discourses of dependency and/or underdevelopment, which include *démodé* notions of influence and/or debt. According to Campos, such a process indicates a “radical change of the register of dialogue:”

Instead of the old questions of influences, in terms of authors and works, a new process is opened up: authors of a supposedly peripheric literature suddenly appropriated the whole code, reclaimed it as their patrimony, like an empty shoe, waiting for a new historical subject, to rethink its functions in terms of a generalized, radical poetics, of which the Brazilian case comes to be the differentiating optics and the condition of possibility. The difference could now be thought of as foundation. Beneath the linearity of conventional

history, this gesture, constellationally – by means of an almost subliminal solidarity – “quoted” another.¹⁷⁸

If to “quote” is to repeat a text in a different context, then concrete poetry is marked by difference and repetition. A “peripheric” literature both “reclaims” and “rethinks” its cultural “patrimony” in terms of *otherness*. Such a radical appropriation of a universal code, according to Campos, ultimately constitutes the “re-cannibalization of a poetics,” a re-vision of *antropofagia* as a polemical act of deconstruction and decolonization that de-centers a Eurocentric tradition in order to formulate a “new poetics, both national and universal.”¹⁷⁹ With its constellation of “forerunners,” concrete poetry is thereby perceived as a “planetarium” of Paz’s “signs in rotation,” in which the “point-events were named (like the signs of a map).”¹⁸⁰

From an ex-centric viewpoint, the geographical and historiographical *difference* and/or *otherness* of Latin American literature relates the invention of a constructive, ideographic tradition that includes Mallarmé, Pound, Joyce, Cummings, Apollinaire, Futurism, and Dadaism to the intervention of a deconstructive, anthropophagic anti-tradition that includes the Baroque Gregório de Matos, the Romantic Sousândrade, the Modernist Oswald de Andrade, the post-modernist João Cabral de Melo, and finally the Noigandres poets. In Gregório de Matos, there is the first *malandro* (“rogue”) poet who plagiarized Góngora as a form of re-creation. In the fragmentation and montage of Sousândrade’s “O Inferno de Wall Street” (“Inferno of Wall Street”), there is a precursor to Pound’s “ideogramic” method of composition. In the manifestos and poetry of Oswald de Andrade, there is the assimilation of Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. Finally, in the meta-linguistic “functional architecture of verse” of João Cabral de Melo Neto, there are structural affinities with Mondrian. The transcultural dialogue between a national and/or local anti-

tradition and an international and/or universal tradition thus draws a “map” for the concrete poetry of the Noigandres group and later the Invenção group (Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, Haroldo de Campos, José Lino Grünwald, Ronaldo Azeredo), which in Brazil emerged and evolved in synchrony with intersemiotic developments in concrete art, such as the Ruptura group (Anatol Wladyslaw, Féjer, Geraldo de Barros, Hermelindo Fiaminghi, Judith Lauand, Leopoldo Haar, Lothar Charoux, Luiz Sacilotto, Maurício Nogueira Lima, Waldemar Cordeiro), and in concrete/electronic music, such as the Música Nova group (Rogério Duprat, Júlio Medaglia, Damiano Cozzella, Gilberto Mendes, Willy Correa de Oliveira). In sum, multiple “points” of contact interrelate in order to configure a “different” pattern, an “other” constellation that, from the margins or periphery of the New World, essentially prefigures a (de)sign for the prescriptions and/or reinscriptions of a new universal code.¹⁸¹

On the horizon of a New World, over the ocean that borders Europe and the Americas, a new constellation appears in the *verbivocovisual* (de)signs of a new poetry composed of the interrelations between things-words in space-time. The form(ul)ation of a concrete poetry occurs in dialogue with innovations in concrete art and concrete/electronic music, and via the (re)cannibalization of a modernist avant-garde poetics. Such an intersemiotic development marks the transfiguration of a “universal” code and the transculturation of a “world” tradition by an *other* (neo) avant-garde, which thereby founds a synchronic anti-tradition of in(ter)vention. The neo-baroque mo(ve)ment in Latin American literature re(dis)covers its very (non) origins in a language of *otherness* that is rearticulated in order to disseminate alterity as identity from an ex-centric (non) *space-in-between* of (colonial) *difference*. A mode of ideographic writing thus becomes, in a sense, a form of geographical writing that is both anti-logocentric and anti-eurocentric. Such an *other*, *different* (hybrid) writing ultimately represents a type of re-writing, a de-construction and/or de-colonization of the historical and cultural (dis)course of modernity.

This section presents concrete poetry as a significant evolution of the modern (re)search for a universal language and/or writing. Following a study by the semiologist Umberto Eco, it relates the re(dis)covery of Egyptian hieroglyphs, Chinese ideograms, and Amerindian glyphs by Renaissance scholars such as Athanasius Kircher to the development of a “real” or “universal” character by Enlightenment philosophers such as Francis Bacon and Gottfried Leibniz. After considering Jacques Derrida’s critique of both a “universal script” and a “graphic poetics,” it concludes by presenting the concrete poetry of Gomringer

and the Noigandres group as the realization of a “universal poetry” and the expression of a new *lingua franca*.

The history of Modernity begins not with the Enlightenment but with the Renaissance, the rebirth of a modern European civilization and its humanism that would mark the death of a primitive Amerindian civilization and its *humanimals*. If the darker, *other* side of modernity is coloniality, the conquest of the Americas describes both the exploration and the exploitation of a New World, where Europe re(dis)covers itself *anew* and as *another*. The colonization of the New World also resulted in the designation and subjugation of new barbarians, both “foreign” and “unintelligible,” who communicated via another language and a different writing. For Europeans, the *glyphs* and codices of Amerindian civilizations represented both a new and an ancient form of writing: new in the sense that it was discovered, ancient in the sense that it resembled other scripts that had evolved into the Greek and Roman alphabets. Like the Egyptian hieroglyphs, the glyphs of the Mayas and Aztecs are characterized by the use of *logographic* signs based on a *rebus* principle in which words are represented by images of things. A logocentric Eurocentrism, despite the emblematic tradition of the Baroque, regarded such a civilized and sacred *scripture* as signs of barbaric and demonic *culture* that must immediately be converted to the Christian *Logos* and the *letter* of the divine Law. The codices were all but completely destroyed by fire in the notorious *autos de fé*, and the remnant glyphs found at the ruins of monuments and temples would only recently be deciphered. The conquest of the New World was therefore also marked by a conversion to the rule of alphabetic writing, and by the repression of (logo)graphic scripts.

The conversion of logographic writing to the *lingua franca* of alphabetic writing (co)incidentally corresponds to an inversion of sorts: the (re)vision of a universal language and/or writing of images. In *The Search for the Perfect Language* (1995), which is part of a series (en)titled “The Making of Europe,” the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco contextualizes the genealogy of a “perfect language of images” within the historiography of European modernity. According to Eco, the Neo-Platonic “revival” of the Renaissance occurred under the sign of a “search for Isis,” the symbol of “an Egypt regarded as the well-spring of original knowledge, and the inventor of a sacred scripture, capable of expressing the unfathomable reality of the divine.”¹⁸² In the medieval text the *Enneads* (V, 8, 5-6), Plotinus had written of the *graphic* (de)signs of hieroglyphic writing:

The wise sages of Egypt [...] in order to designate things with wisdom do not use designs of letters, which develop into discourses and propositions, and which represent sounds and words; instead they use designs of images, each of which stands for a distinct thing; and it is these that they sculpt onto their temples. [...] Every incised sign is thus, at once, knowledge, wisdom, a real entity captured in one stroke.¹⁸³

A renewed interest in hieroglyphs began in 1419 with the discovery of a “mysterious” manuscript that described the “symbolic meaning” and/or “polysemic value” of the representative *figures* of hieroglyphic scripts.¹⁸⁴ The *Hieroglyphica* was based, however, on both a *preconception* and a *misconception*, since it not only drew from the European imaginary of the medieval bestiary, but also imagined ancient Egyptian writing to be *pictographic* in character. As Eco observes, although the “hieroglyphic script is undoubtedly composed, in part, of iconic signs,” some of which are “easily recognizable,” there are other signs that “seem to bear only the remotest resemblance to the things they are supposed to represent.”¹⁸⁵ Consequently, “these signs are not icons (representing a thing by direct similarity) but rather *ideograms*, which work by a sort of rhetorical substitution.”¹⁸⁶

Furthermore, due to the limitations of such a form of representation, the ideograms had also been transformed into *phonograms*, which represent sounds by means of images. Consequently, the “complexities” and “ambiguities inherent in a form of writing that could be differently read either phonetically or ideographically” was such that, “around the term represented by a sign (which was given an initial phonetic reading) there formed a halo of visual connotations and secondary senses, a sort of chord of associated meanings which served to amplify the original semantic range of the term.”¹⁸⁷ If, for the priests of a dying civilization, the “hieroglyphs appeared as a perfect language,” as Eco reveals, then, for the scholars of a civilization that was being reborn, hieroglyphic writing would also inspire the dream of a universal language of images.¹⁸⁸

With the progressive march of a modern European civilization toward both the East and the West, the encounters with both Chinese ideograms and Amerindian glyphs would also inspire significant (re)visions of logographic scripts as a form of universal language and/or writing. If the hieroglyphs were an esoteric relic of the past, then the ideograms and the glyphs were an exotic art(ifact) of the present, albeit with significant differences with respect to the reception of such *other* writings. As Eco observes:

As a civilization, Egypt no longer existed, and for the Europeans it was not yet a land for future conquest. Ignored in its geopolitical inconsistency, it became a Hermetical phantom. In this role it could be identified as the spiritual ancestor of the Christian West, the progenitor of the occident’s patrimony of mystic wisdom. China, by contrast, was no phantom but a tangible Other. It was concretely there, still a political force of respectable dimensions, still a culture alternative to that of the West [...] The Americas, by contrast, were designated as the land of conquest; here there would be no compromise with idolaters and their low-grade species of writing: the idolaters were to be converted, and every trace of their original culture, irredeemably polluted with diabolic influences, was to be wiped away.¹⁸⁹

Although the logographic writings of the Chinese and Amerindians were both discovered during the Renaissance, the former was valued for its evidently *ideographic* character while the latter was devalued for its apparently *pictographic* nature. Scholars not only “insisted” on the “international character of the Chinese script,” according to Eco, but also “offered” Chinese as “a model for an international language.”¹⁹⁰ Unlike the Egyptian hieroglyphs, the ideograms were not a “puzzle” to be deciphered, since “Chinese was a writing system still in use, and the key to its understanding had already been revealed.”¹⁹¹ The German Jesuit scholar Athanasius Kircher, who was both an Egyptologist and a Sinologist, would recognize that “Chinese characters were originally iconic and only later had grown extremely stylized over time, so as to lose their original similarity with things,” and also that “ideograms did not express either letters or syllables, but referred to concepts.”¹⁹² Kircher’s (mis)take on the Egyptian hieroglyphs, however, reveals (re)current preconceptions and/or misconceptions about the Amerindian glyphs. By Eco’s account, if the Egyptian hieroglyphs “discharged their allegorical and metaphorical force immediately, in virtue of what Kircher held to be their inherent power of revelation,” the Amerindian glyphs “seemed to Kircher inferior because they were immediately pictographic, as they were representing only individuals and events; thus they looked like mere mnemonic notes unable to bear arcane revelations.”¹⁹³ The “inferiority of Amerindian characters” was thereby apparent not only in relation to Egyptian hieroglyphs but also to Chinese ideography, which was deemed “superior to Amerindian pictography because it was capable of expressing abstract concepts.”¹⁹⁴ Nonetheless, the Chinese ideogram was in turn considered to be inferior to the Egyptian hieroglyph because “its decipherment remained too univocal,” thereby depriving its “potential for mystery,” since it was irremediably “bound to the concept it represented.”¹⁹⁵

The Egyptian hieroglyph displayed its “superiority by its ability to summon up entire ‘texts,’ and to express complex chunks of infinitely interpretable content.”¹⁹⁶ Kircher’s argument, as paraphrased by Eco, was that the Chinese ideogram was not “hieratic” but “prosaic:”

There was nothing hieratic about the Chinese character; there was nothing that veiled it from profane eyes, hiding unfathomable depths of truth; it was a prosaic instrument of everyday communication [...] As to the Amerindian signs, not only were they patently denotative, but they revealed the diabolical nature of a people who had lost the last vestige of archaic wisdom.¹⁹⁷

From the Eurocentric and/or logocentric perspective of the Christian *logos*, a hierarchy was thereby established between hieroglyphic, ideographic, pictographic scripts that recovered and/or uncovered the ancient origins of European culture in relation to the newly discovered Asian and Amerindian cultures.

In the (dis)course of Modernity, the subalternation of the *other* to the European corresponds, in a sense, to the subordination of writing to the *logos*. In order to write a history of writing that *subjected* written language to spoken language, scholars would eventually develop, according to Eco, “a notion of writing as evolving in stages from a pictographic one (representing things), through hieroglyphs (representing qualities and passion as well), to ideograms, capable of giving an abstract and arbitrary representation of ideas.”¹⁹⁸ The evolution of writing had culminated in alphabetic writing, which would serve as a medium of both linguistic and economic *exchange*:

Alphabetic writing could be invented only by a commercial nation, whose merchants had sailed to distant lands, learning to speak foreign tongues. The invention of the alphabet represented a higher stage because the alphabet did more than represent words, it analysed them as well. It is at this point that there begins to emerge the analogy between money and the alphabet: both serve as a universal medium in the process of exchange – of goods in the first instance, of ideas in the second.¹⁹⁹

According to Eco, the essential *value* of the alphabet was such that it not only represented, but “analysed” words by means of letters. Alphabetic writing is therefore a phonetic writing that reproduces the sounds of spoken language. Nonetheless, if the needs of economic commerce would lead to the “invention” of the “universal medium” of alphabetic writing, the necessities of philosophical communication would also lead to the imagination of a universal language of ideographic writing. The “discovery” of the aforementioned “international character of the Chinese script” would, as such, inspire the search for a *real character* as an *a priori* philosophical language.²⁰⁰ For the English philosopher Francis Bacon, it was by no means necessary “that cogitations be expressed by the medium of words.” If in the “commerce of barbarous people” Bacon sees a language of gestures, in China and the Far East he envisages a writing of “characters real, which express neither letters nor words in gross, but things or notions.”²⁰¹ The “international” character of the “real characters” was readily apparent, since “countries and provinces which understand not one another’s language can nevertheless read one another’s writings, because the characters are accepted more generally than the languages do extend.”²⁰² Such a conclusion was based on the fact that Chinese ideograms could be understood by both the Japanese and the Koreans. For Bacon, then, “notes of cogitations” were of “two sorts: the one when the note hath some similitude or congruity with the notion; the other *ad placitum*, having force only by contract or acceptance.”²⁰³ Bacon as such differentiated between signs of two types: iconic and/or motivated signs (i.e. hieroglyphs and gestures) and arbitrary and/or conventional signs (i.e. words).²⁰⁴ Unlike Egyptian hieroglyphs, Chinese characters are (pre)conceived as “real characters” that represent “notions” (or ideas) without bearing any “similitude” (or resemblance) to the things that are depicted and/or described, a (mis)conception that actually

overlooks *traces* of iconicity in the ideogram, known to Kircher but unknown to Bacon and contemporaries such as John Wilkins, who would conduct his own (re)search for a “real character” and/or a universal “philosophical language.” As Eco concludes, Chinese ideograms were ultimately, for Bacon, “examples of signs which, though arbitrary and conventional, stand directly for a signified notion without the mediation of a verbal language.”²⁰⁵

Based on the model of ideographic writing, the development of a “real character” as a philosophical language *par excellence* would culminate in Gottfried Leibniz’ *characteristica universalis*, which had evolved from his (re)search for an *ars combinatoria* and an “alphabet of human thought.” Such a universal writing was (co)incidentally related to the combinatory art of the *I-Ching* (*Book of Changes*), the “discovery” of which provoked a profound “reaction” in Leibniz, who would become known for his interest in Chinese language and writing.²⁰⁶ In a letter to Father Joachim Bouvet, a missionary familiar with China, Leibniz writes that “Chinese characters are perhaps more philosophical and seem to be built upon more intellectual considerations, such as are given by numbers, orders, and relations; thus there are only detached strokes that do not culminate in some resemblances to a sort of body.”²⁰⁷ Leibniz nonetheless “insisted,” according to Eco, “that his notion of a real character was profoundly different from that of those who aspired to a universal writing modeled on Chinese.”²⁰⁸ Nonetheless, Leibniz would design a “plan” for a “universal script, which would have the advantages of the Chinese script, for each person would understand it in his own language, but which would infinitely surpass the Chinese [...] having characters perfectly linked according to the order and connections of things.”²⁰⁹ The “universal

character” was thus intended to be a universalized form of both the “real character” and Chinese script, which was *ideographic* in character.

The re(dis)covery of *other*, logographic forms of writing presented an *alternative* to the alphabetic writing and the rule of the *letter* in the discourse of Modernity. Although Amerindian glyphs would all but disappear without a trace, Chinese ideograms would appear to (pre)figure a “real” and/or “universal” character. In *Of Grammatology* (1967), whose expressed purpose is the development of a “science of writing,” Derrida observes that the (re)search for a universal writing and/or philosophical language was thereby founded on a “Chinese prejudice,” inasmuch as “all the philosophical projects of a universal script and of a universal language [...] encouraged seeing in the recently discovered Chinese script a model of the philosophical language thus removed from history.”²¹⁰ Such a “history” was both Eurocentric and logocentric, inasmuch as “logocentrism is an ethnocentric metaphysics” that is thereby “related to the history of the West.”²¹¹ The discovery of “nonoccidental scripts” that were apparently nonphonetic in character would cause a “decentering” of logocentrism that was nonetheless, in turn, “recentered” by Eurocentrism.²¹² With the exoticism of orientalism, the “concept of Chinese writing thus functioned as a sort of European hallucination.”²¹³ Although such a fantasy would lose the fascination of modern philosophy after Leibniz, it would gain the imagination of modernist poetry after Fenollosa, who would eventually (fore)see the “pictorial method” of the ideogram as the “ideal language of the world.”²¹⁴ According to Derrida, the “irreducibly graphic poetics” of Fenollosa and Pound, in addition to that of Mallarmé, as such represented “the first break in the most entrenched Western tradition.”²¹⁵ The “historical significance” of the Chinese ideogram is therefore evident in the various *graphic* innovations that would characterize Modernism and the avant-

garde. In order to re-enact both the project of the “historical” avant-garde and the project of a universal writing “*for the very first time*,” concretism and a (neo) avant-garde would re-turn to the “ideogram concept” in the sense(s) of “spatial or visual syntax” and of a “method of composition based on direct-analogical, not logical-discursive juxtaposition of elements.”²¹⁶ Influenced by the idea(l) of a “universal” concrete art, Gomringer becomes “convinced” that “concrete poetry is in the process of realizing the idea of a universal poetry.” The (de)signs of the times would furthermore require “a thorough revision of concepts, knowledge, faith and lack of faith in poetics, if poetry is to exist in earnest and positively in modern society.”²¹⁷ Such a critical (re)vision would characterize the re-cannibalization of a poetics by the Noigandres group, whose “anthropophagic reason” decenters Eurocentrism and deconstructs logocentrism. According to Haroldo de Campos:

Brazilian concrete poetry was able to entertain such a project for an ecumenical language: the new barbarians of a peripheral nation, rethinking the legacy of a universal poetry and surpassing it under the de-centred (because ex-centric) flag of “anthropophagic reason” (analogical to the “excluded third”), the deconstructor and transconstructor of this legacy, now assumed as a kind of devouring. It advocated the totality of the code and reworked it through the expropriating lens of the evolutive circumstance of Brazilian poetry, which, in turn, went on to formulate the terms of a new *lingua franca* of universal transit.²¹⁸

Heralding a “new poetry” composed of *verbivocovisual* ideograms, the “new barbarians” effectively transform a universal code and/or world tradition in order to re-formulate a “new *lingua franca*.”²¹⁹ In the end, if the “search” for a universal *character* via an enlightened reason represents a construction of European modernity, then the (re)search for an ideographic writing via an “anthropophagic reason” represents a deconstruction of Latin American coloniality. An *international, intersemiotic* concrete poetry thus reawakens the

dream of a universal language and/or writing from the ex-centric (non) *space-in-between* of (colonial) *difference*, dis-located on the mythical island *utopia* of Brazil.



“código” – Augusto de Campos (1973)

¹ John Donne, “The Extasie.”

² Haroldo de Campos, *A Arte no Horizonte do Provável* (São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 1977), 157.

³ Augusto de Campos, “Poetamenos,” in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 21.

⁴ Quoted in Hermann Danuser, “Arnold Schönberg – Portrait of a Century,” accessed January 3, 2010, http://www.schoenberg.at/1_as/essay/essay_e.htm.

⁵ See: Hermann Danuser, “Arnold Schönberg – Portrait of a Century,” accessed January 3, 2010, http://www.schoenberg.at/1_as/essay/essay_e.htm.

⁶ Claus Clüver, “The Noigandres Poets and Concrete Art,” *CiberLetras: Revista de crítica literaria y de cultura - Journal of literary criticism and culture* 17 (2007), <http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/ciberletras/v17/cluver.htm>.

⁷ Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 158.

⁸ Pierre Boulez, “Recherches maintenant,” in *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship*, trans. Stephen Walsh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 16.

⁹ See: “musique concrete,” in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*, ed. Michael Kennedy and Joyce Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁰ Pierre Schaeffer, *Traité des objets musicaux*, (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 23.

¹¹ Pierre Boulez, “Incipit,” in *Stocktakings from an apprenticeship*, trans. Stephen Walsh (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 216.

¹² Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 19.

¹³ Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 20.

¹⁴ Haroldo de Campos, “The Rule of Anthropophagy: Europe Under the Sign of Devoration,” trans. Maria Tai Wolff, *Latin American Literary Review* 14:27 (1986), 53, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20119404>.

¹⁵ Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 30.

¹⁶ Haroldo de Campos, “Evolução de Formas: Poesia Concreta,” in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 55.

¹⁷ Quoted in “Concrete art.” *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*.

¹⁸ Quoted in David Piper, *The Illustrated History of Art* (London: Bounty Books, 2004), 436.

¹⁹ Décio Pignatari, “Arte Concreta: Objeto e Objetivo,” in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 45.

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- ²⁰ Haroldo de Campos, "Aspectos da Poesia Concreta," in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 105.
- ²¹ See: "Broadway Boogie Woogie," The Museum of Modern Art, accessed July 9, 2012, http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=78682.
- ²² Décio Pignatari, "Concrete Poetry: A Brief Socio-Historical Guideline," trans. Jon M. Tolman, *Poetics Today* 3:3 (1982), 192, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1772398>.
- ²³ Quoted in Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, eds., *Theories and documents of contemporary art: A sourcebook of artists' writings* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 74.
- ²⁴ Quoted in Stiles and Selz, eds., *Theories and documents of contemporary art*, 74.
- ²⁵ See: M.J. Grant, *Serial music, serial aesthetics: compositional theory in post-war Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 186.
- ²⁶ See: Grant, *Serial music, serial aesthetics*, 236.
- ²⁷ Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos, "Pilot Plan for Concrete Poetry," in *Concrete Poetry: A World View*, by Mary Ellen Solt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 71-72, <http://www.ubu.com/papers/noigandres01.html>.
- ²⁸ Augusto de Campos, "Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta," in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 31.
- ²⁹ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ³⁰ Augusto de Campos, "concrete poetry." *Poesia concreta: o projeto verbivocovisual* (São Paulo: Artemeios, 2008), 78.
- ³¹ Augusto de Campos, "concrete poetry," 78.
- ³² Ernest Fenollosa, "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry," in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 100.
- ³³ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 104.
- ³⁴ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 101.
- ³⁵ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 101.
- ³⁶ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 101.
- ³⁷ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 101.
- ³⁸ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 107.
- ³⁹ Quoted in Wassily Kandinsky, *Sounds*, trans. Elizabeth R. Napier (London: Yale University Press, 1981), 2.

⁴⁰ Originally quoted in “Evolução de Formas: Poesia Concreta,” by Haroldo de Campos, in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 58. Translated in *Anthology of Concrete Poetry*, ed. Emmett Williams (New York: Something Else Press, 1967).

⁴¹ Öyvind Fahlström, “Manifesto for Concrete Poetry,” in *Concrete Poetry: A World View*, by Mary Ellen Solt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 74.

⁴² Mary Ellen Solt, ed., *Concrete Poetry: A World View* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 30.

⁴³ Solt, *Concrete Poetry*, 29.

⁴⁴ Fahlström, “Manifesto for Concrete Poetry,” 75.

⁴⁵ Fahlström, “Manifesto for Concrete Poetry,” 76.

⁴⁶ Fahlström, “Manifesto for Concrete Poetry,” 76.

⁴⁷ Fahlström, “Manifesto for Concrete Poetry,” 77.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Solt, *Concrete Poetry*, 9.

⁴⁹ Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 159.

⁵⁰ Quoted in Solt, *Concrete Poetry*, 9.

⁵¹ Eugen Gomringer. “From Line to Constellation,” in *Concrete Poetry: A World View*, ed. Mary Ellen Solt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 67, <http://www.ubu.com/papers/gomringer01.html>.

⁵² Gomringer, “From Line to Constellation.”

⁵³ Gomringer, “From Line to Constellation.”

⁵⁴ Gomringer, “From Line to Constellation.”

⁵⁵ Eugen Gomringer. “Concrete Poetry,” in *Concrete Poetry: A World View*, ed. Mary Ellen Solt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 67-68, <http://www.ubu.com/papers/gomringer02.html>.

⁵⁶ Solt, *Concrete Poetry*, 13.

⁵⁷ Eugen Gomringer. “Concrete Poetry.”

⁵⁸ Eugen Gomringer. “Concrete Poetry.”

⁵⁹ Quoted in *The Art of Poetry*, by Paul Valéry, trans. Denise Folliot (London: Rutledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), 63.

⁶⁰ William Carlos Williams, “A Sort of a Song.”

⁶¹ Eugen Gomringer. “Concrete Poetry.”

⁶² Haroldo de Campos, “Rule of Anthropophagy,” 53.

⁶³ Eugen Gomringer. “Concrete Poetry.”

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- ⁶⁴ Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 159.
- ⁶⁵ Haroldo de Campos, "Ideograma, Anagrama, Diagrama: Uma Leitura de Fenollosa," in *Ideograma: Lógica, Poesia, Linguagem*, ed. Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2000), 16.
- ⁶⁶ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁶⁷ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁶⁸ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 102.
- ⁶⁹ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 102.
- ⁷⁰ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 102.
- ⁷¹ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 102.
- ⁷² Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 102.
- ⁷³ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 102.
- ⁷⁴ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 105; Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁷⁵ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 107.
- ⁷⁶ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 107.
- ⁷⁷ Haroldo de Campos, *Arte no Horizonte do Provável*, 64.
- ⁷⁸ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 110.
- ⁷⁹ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character," 112.
- ⁸⁰ Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, ed. and trans. Jay Leda (New York: Harcourt Inc., 1949), 29-30.
- ⁸¹ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 30.
- ⁸² Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 31.
- ⁸³ Haroldo de Campos, "Ideograma," 66.
- ⁸⁴ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁸⁵ Walter Benjamin, *Reflections*, ed. Peter Demetz (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), 316.
- ⁸⁶ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁸⁷ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁸⁸ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ⁸⁹ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."

⁹⁰ Campos et al., “Pilot Plan.”

⁹¹ Pignatari, “Concrete Poetry,” 192.

⁹² See: Charles A. Perrone, *Seven Faces: Brazilian Poetry Since Modernism* (Durham, NC, USA: Duke University Press, 1996).

⁹³ Campos et al., “Pilot Plan.”

⁹⁴ Campos et al., “Pilot Plan.”

⁹⁵ Quoted in Haroldo de Campos, “Poetry and modernity: from the death of art to the constellation. The post-utopian poem,” in *Poesia concreta: o projeto verbivocovisual* (São Paulo: Artemeios, 2008), 130.

⁹⁶ Stéphane Mallarmé, “Crisis of Poetry,” in *Toward the open field: poets on the art of poetry, 1800-1950*, ed. Melissa Kwasny (Middletown, CT, USA: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 151.

⁹⁷ Mallarmé, “Crisis of Poetry,” 152.

⁹⁸ Mallarmé, “Crisis of Poetry,” 154-155.

⁹⁹ Mallarmé, “Crisis of Poetry,” 156.

¹⁰⁰ Mallarmé, “Crisis of Poetry,” 157.

¹⁰¹ Mallarmé, “Crisis of Poetry,” 157.

¹⁰² Mallarmé, *Dice Thrown*, 105.

¹⁰³ Mallarmé, *Dice Thrown*, 105.

¹⁰⁴ Paz, *The Bow and the Lyre*, 249.

¹⁰⁵ Paz, *The Bow and the Lyre*, 249.

¹⁰⁶ Mallarmé, *Dice Thrown*, 105.

¹⁰⁷ Benjamin, *Reflections*, 78.

¹⁰⁸ Haroldo de Campos, “Poetry and modernity: from the death of art to the constellation. The post-utopian poem,” in *Poesia concreta: o projeto verbivocovisual* (São Paulo: Artemeios, 2008), 132.

¹⁰⁹ Paz, *The Bow and the Lyre*, 255.

¹¹⁰ Haroldo de Campos, “Ideograma,” 16.

¹¹¹ See: Cordell D.K. Yee. “Discourse on Ideogrammic Method: Epistemology and Pound’s Poetics,” *American Literature* 59:2 (1987), 242-256, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2927043>.

¹¹² Haroldo de Campos, “Aspectos da Poesia Concreta,” 99.

¹¹³ Augusto de Campos, “Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta,” 28.

¹¹⁴ T.S. Eliot, introduction to *Ezra Pound: Selected Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1928), 14-15.

¹¹⁵ See: James Joyce, *Finnegan's Wake* [Book 2, Episode 3] (New York: Penguin Books, 1967), 341, http://wikilivres.info/wiki/Finnegans_Wake/Book_2/Chapter_3.

“Up to this curkscraw bind an admirable verbivocovisual pre-sentment of the worldrenowned Caerholme Event has been being given by The Irish Race and World.”

¹¹⁶ Pignatari, “Concrete Poetry,” 189.

¹¹⁷ Augusto de Campos, “Concrete Coin of Speech,” trans. Jon M. Tolman, *Poetics Today* 3:3 (1982), 170, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1772396>.

¹¹⁸ Augusto de Campos, “Concrete Coin of Speech,” 170-171.

¹¹⁹ Pignatari, “Concrete Poetry,” 189.

¹²⁰ E. E. Cummings, foreword to *Is 5*.

¹²¹ Haroldo Campos, “A Obra de Arte Aberta,” in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Críticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 37.

¹²² Pignatari, “Concrete Poetry,” 190.

¹²³ Pignatari, “Concrete Poetry,” 190.

¹²⁴ Augusto de Campos, “Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta,” 29.

¹²⁵ Pignatari, “Concrete Poetry,” 190.

¹²⁶ E. E. Cummings, Foreword to *Is 5*.

¹²⁷ Augusto de Campos, “Points – Periphery – Concrete Poetry,” trans. Jon M. Tolman, in *The Avant-Garde Tradition in Literature*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1982).

¹²⁸ Augusto de Campos, “Points – Periphery – Concrete Poetry.”

¹²⁹ Quoted in Augusto de Campos, “Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta,” 30.

¹³⁰ Augusto de Campos, “Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta,” 31.

¹³¹ Quoted in Michel Butor, preface to *Calligrammes: Poèmes de la paix et de la guerre*, by Guillaume Apollinaire (Paris: Gallimard: 1966), 7.

¹³² See: Willard Bohn, “The Abstract Vision of Marius de Zayas,” *The Art Bulletin* 62:3 (1980), 434-452, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3050029>.

¹³³ José Juan Tablada, *Li-Po y otros poemas* (1920), <http://www.tablada.unam.mx/poesia/lipo/index.htm>.

¹³⁴ Willard Bohn, “The Visual Trajectory of José Juan Tablada,” *Hispanic Review* 69:2 (2001), 199, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3247038>.

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- ¹³⁵ Quoted in Willard Bohn, "The Visual Trajectory of José Juan Tablada," *Hispanic Review* 69:2 (2001), 200-201, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3247038>.
- ¹³⁶ Bohn, "Visual Trajectory of José Juan Tablada," 201.
- ¹³⁷ Pignatari, "Concrete Poetry," 190.
- ¹³⁸ Haroldo de Campos, "Aspectos da Poesia Concreta," 100.
- ¹³⁹ Augusto de Campos, "Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta," 27.
- ¹⁴⁰ Gabriel Arboin, "Devant l'idéogramme d' Apollinaire," *Les Soirees de Paris* 26 and 27 (1914), 383-385, http://www.uni-due.de/lyriktheorie/texte/1914_arboin.html#fuss1.
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- ¹⁴² F. T. Marinetti, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 16.
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- ¹⁴⁵ F. T. Marinetti, "A Response to Objections," in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 21.
- ¹⁴⁶ F. T. Marinetti, "Destruction of Syntax – Imagination without Strings – Words-in-Freedom," in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 30.
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- ¹⁴⁸ Marinetti, "Destruction of Syntax," 28.
- ¹⁴⁹ Marinetti, "Destruction of Syntax," 29.
- ¹⁵⁰ Campos, "Aspectos da Poesia Concreta," 100.
- ¹⁵¹ Campos, "Aspectos da Poesia Concreta," 100.
- ¹⁵² Augusto de Campos, "Pontos – Periferia – Poesia Concreta," 26.
- ¹⁵³ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."
- ¹⁵⁴ Haroldo de Campos, "olho por olho a olho nu," in *Teoria da Poesia Concreta: Textos Criticos e Manifestos 1950-1960*, by Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1975), 53.
- ¹⁵⁵ Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 481.
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¹⁸² Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, trans. James Fentress (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 144.

¹⁸³ Quoted in Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, trans. James Fentress (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 144-145.

¹⁸⁴ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 146.

¹⁸⁵ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 146-147.

¹⁸⁶ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 147.

¹⁸⁷ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 148-149.

¹⁸⁸ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 149.

¹⁸⁹ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 161-162.

¹⁹⁰ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 158-159.

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¹⁹² Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 160.

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²⁰⁴ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 212.

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²⁰⁸ Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 270.

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²¹⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 76.

²¹¹ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 78.

²¹² Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 76.

²¹³ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 80.

²¹⁴ Fenollosa, "Chinese Written Character ," 111.

²¹⁵ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 92.

²¹⁶ Campos et al., "Pilot Plan."

²¹⁷ Gomringer. "Concrete Poetry."

²¹⁸ Haroldo de Campos, "The post-utopian poem," 136.

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CHAPTER 3

NEW CINEMA

“Building a completely new form of cinematography – the realization of revolution in the general history of culture; building a synthesis of science, art, and class militancy.”

– Sergei Eisenstein

“A new historical situation and a new man born in the process of the anti-imperialist struggle demanded a new, revolutionary attitude from the film-makers of the world.”

– Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino

In a desolate frontier territory, an unfortunate cowherd slaughters his exploitive master and becomes a fugitive. The peasant initially seeks refuge in a messianic cult led by a popular saint, then in a band of marauders led by a folk hero, before finally fleeing alone on an uncertain path to redemption. Between a “black god” (the saint) and a “white devil” (the bandit), in a fabled “land of the sun,” there is man, an outcast wandering the desert in search of the proverbial bread of life. A nomad in a no man’s land, he yearns for a way *out*, a means to (ful)fill a desperate hunger. The only viable reaction to such misery is violence, a barbaric call to arms that is not primitive but revolutionary in character. The madness, the delirium, is ultimately a rite of passage for the re-birth of a new mankind. Narrated in the (dis)guise of myth, what transpires is not merely an imaginary story *per se* but an allegorical transfiguration of history itself, the re-writing of a configuration that is at once both real and surreal. Here is a “true” alternative cinema, a transcription of another, different image of

reality. The lights, the camera, and the action re-present a (third) world in transition, a land on the verge of an apocalyptic transformation. According to the prophecy, the desert will become sea, and *vice versa*. There will be water for the thirsty, and bread for the hungry. As prescribed in the Beatitudes, the last will be first and the first will be last. But the revolution will not be “televised,” either in black and white or in color. It will not be seen on film but in film, via the emergence and/or insurgence of a dialectical cinema that synthesizes a “faith” in the image and a “faith” in reality. A hungry, violent *ezthetiks* thereby turns misery into a *tour de force*, a lack of resources into an abundance of material, underdevelopment into a mode of production, dependency into a slogan for independence, imitation into a form of originality, marginality into the *locus* of an anti-tradition, and *otherness* into the alter-ego of identity. If the pen is mightier than the sword, then the camera is more powerful than the gun in the struggle for freedom and/or liberation against cultural imperialism and/or neo-colonialism. Thus, by means of an anthropophagic transculturation performed from an ex-centric (non) *space-in-between* of (colonial) *difference*, the genre of the western is re-made into a *nordestern*, the counter-discourse of socialism is re-conceived in terms of decolonization, and a bourgeois *politique des auteurs* is re-enacted by a *tricontinental* filmmaker with a utopian dream: the dawn of a new cinema in the tropics.



Poster for *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* – Rogério Duarte (1964)

Deus e o diabo na terra do sol (*Black God, White Devil* – 1964), a film conceived and written by the acclaimed director Glauber Rocha, represents an early masterpiece of the Cinema Novo movement, which emerged in Brazil during the tumultuous sociocultural moment of the 1960s. After a period of social and political unrest, in 1964 a *coup d'état* would place the country under the rule of a brutal military regime and its repressive state apparatus. Polemical in its place of origin, Cinema Novo nonetheless made headlines at leading film festivals and was disseminated as both an innovative and an alternative cinema with revolutionary pretensions. Armed only with “a camera in hand and an idea in the head,” as Rocha’s celebrated motto prescribes, Cinema Novo filmmakers sought not only to cast light upon an intolerable reality by reproducing it on film, but also to forecast an effective reaction against such a desperate, miserable situation via a discourse of violence. A Brazilian *cinema novo* thus arose as a form of transcultural dialogue with European “new” cinemas such as the French *nouvelle vague* and the Italian *neorealismo*, and as a response to modernist developments in the cinema. With its aesthetics of “hunger,” Cinema Novo furthermore constituted a critical appropriation and original transformation of the tradition(s) of world cinema via the anthologization of universal cinematographic codes and the cannibalization of consecrated *auteurs*. The result was a new type of cinema – dialectical, inter-codical, marginal, “minor” – produced in a tricontinental, guerrilla spirit of revolt against imperialism and/or capitalism. Cinema Novo would consequently inspire the form(ul)ation of an *international, decolonized Third (World) Cinema* founded on both the “truth” of dependency and underdevelopment, and the (sur)reality of an absurd (sub)human

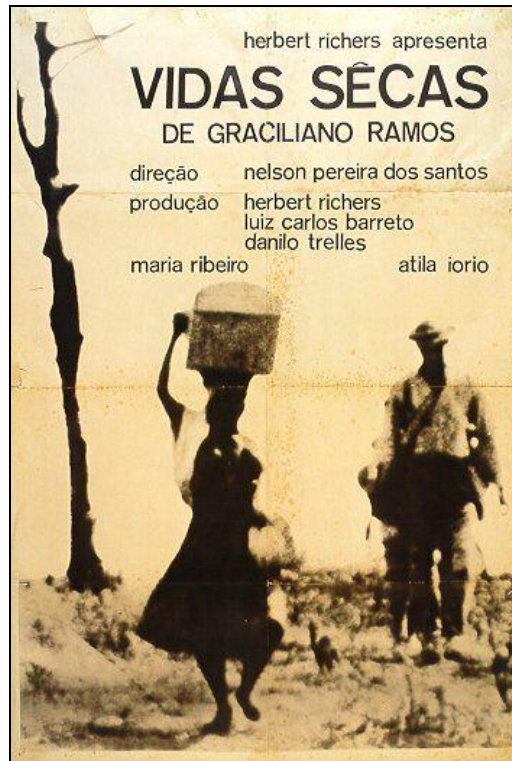
condition that characterized a Latin America marked by the geopolitical (de)signs of a globalized “cold war.”

This section traces the emergence and evolution of *cinema novo* as a movement in synchrony with “new” developments in the cinema. It begins by presenting the relations between Cinema Novo and the New Wave as propagated by filmmakers such as Alain Resnais, François Truffaut, and Jean Luc Godard, whose auteurism equated the cinema to a form of language and/or mode of writing. It then presents the relations between Cinema Novo and Neo-Realism as propagated by director Roberto Rossellini and scriptwriter Cesare Zavattini, whose ideas would inspire the development of a new cinema in Latin America. Finally, it presents the form(ul)ation of Cinema Novo, as propagated by filmmakers such as Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Carlos Diegues, Glauber Rocha, and Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, as a dialectical synthesis of the cinematographic formalism based on filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein’s theories of montage and the cinematographic realism founded on critic André Bazin’s theories of mise-en-scène, thereby relating it to *cinéma vérité*. It also differentiates Cinema Novo as a “dialectical cinema” because of its emblematic representations as “allegories of underdevelopment,” as described by critic Ismail Xavier. In conclusion, it classifies Cinema Novo as an example of an “inter-codical” cinema, as defined by semiologist Christian Metz.

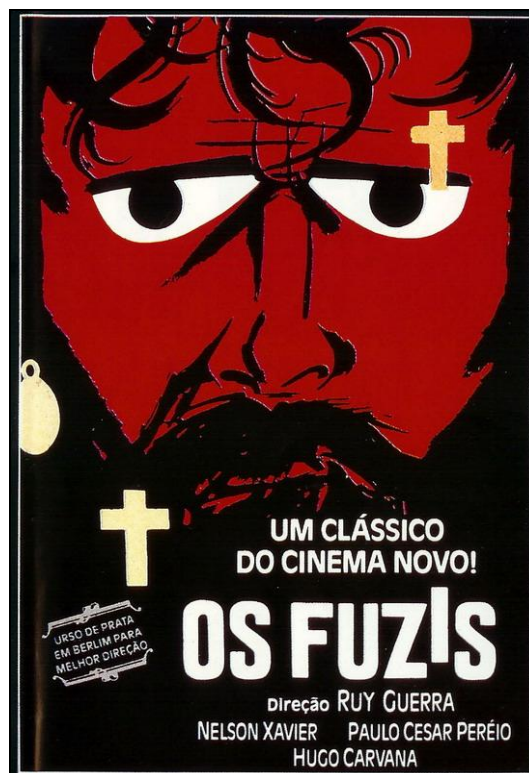
new wave

Nominated for the Golden Palm Award at the 1964 Cannes Film Festival, *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* was one of several early Cinema Novo films to earn prestige overseas,

such as Nelson Pereira dos Santos' *Vidas secas* (*Barren Lives* – 1964), and Ruy Guerra's *Os fuzis* (*The Guns* – 1964), both of which also portray the plight of poor, landless peasants in the arid *sertão* ("hinterlands") region of the Brazilian Northeast. The realization of these and other films led the Brazilian Cinema Novo movement to be considered by critics as one of the most "promising" of all the "new cinemas" that were then proliferating around the globe, the most notable of which was the French *nouvelle vague*.¹ An example of cinematic modernism and of European "art cinema," the New Wave rose to prominence between 1959 and 1964 as a new audiovisual language that corresponded to "rhythm" of modern life. As the French filmmaker Alain Resnais observes: "Modern life is fragmented, everyone feels that. Painting, as well as literature, bears witness to it, so why should the cinema not do so as well, instead of clinging to the traditional linear narrative."² Resnais' own *Hiroshima, Mon Amour* (1959), along with François Truffaut's *Les quatre cents coups* (*The 400 Blows* – 1959) and Jean-Luc Godard's *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless* – 1960), inaugurated and established the widely influential movement whose innovative techniques included the use of hand-held cameras, direct sound, and natural light, all of which created a sense of realism, as well as the use of radical editing procedures such as the jump cut, which unmasked the illusion of reality by subverting spatial and temporal continuity. As in other works of modern art, the self-reflexive nature of New Wave cinema is evident, both in the *intertextuality* of filmic citations and/or homages, and in the (self) *referentiality* of filming the act of filmmaking itself. Last but not least, the use of improvisation is another predominant characteristic, not only for aesthetic but also for practical reasons, since most (if not all) of the directors were working on low-budget, independent films. Such a "production strategy," in addition to the aforementioned techniques, would become an important model



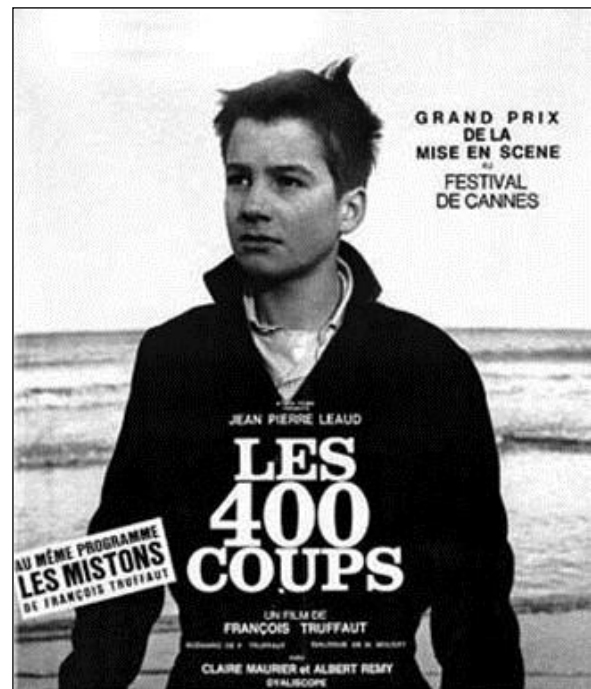
Poster for *Vidas secas*



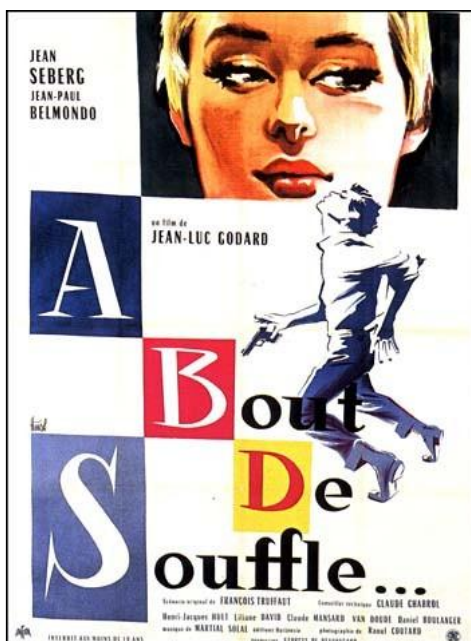
Poster for *Os fuzis*



Poster for *Hiroshima, mon amour*



Poster for *Les 400 coups*



Poster for *  bout de souffle*

for the Cinema Novo movement, whose chronic lack of resources reflected the dire economic situation of Brazil and Latin America in general.³

In addition to sharing the low-budget, independent film production strategy of the New Wave, Cinema Novo filmmakers were also inspired by the *auteurism* of their counterparts, whose signature styles turned directors into “authors.” Auteur theory as such emerged in the film criticism of the *Cahiers du Cinéma*, an influential magazine founded by the renowned critic André Bazin that included writings by Truffaut and Godard. Truffaut’s essay “Une certaine tendance du cinéma français” (“A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema” – 1954) would become a manifesto for the “politique des auteurs,” a policy of reception that would in turn serve as a principle of production for the New Wave movement. According to Bazin’s definition, the “*politique des auteurs* consists, in short, of choosing the personal factor in artistic creation as a standard of reference, and then of assuming that it continues and even progresses, from one film to the next.”⁴ The idea that the director of a collective ensemble of production could be considered the author of an individual work in a sense approximated the cinema to literature, the filmmaker to the writer. It was the novelist and filmmaker Alexandre Astruc who, in his seminal essay “Naissance d’une nouvelle avant-garde: La caméra-stylo” (“Birth of a New Avant-Garde: The Camera-Pen” – 1948), laid a foundation for auteurism by declaring that the cinema was becoming a form of language and/or writing:

Le cinéma est en train tout simplement de devenir un moyen d’expression, ce qu’ont été tous les autres arts avant lui, ce qu’ont été en particulier la peinture et le roman. Après avoir été successivement une attraction foraine, un divertissement analogue au théâtre de boulevard, ou un moyen de conserver les images de l’époque, il devient peu à peu un langage. Un langage, c’est-à-dire une forme dans laquelle et par laquelle un artiste peut exprimer sa pensée, aussi abstraite soit-elle, ou traduire ses obsessions exactement comme il en est aujourd’hui de l’essai ou du roman. C’est pourquoi j’appelle ce nouvel âge du

cinéma celui de la Caméra stylo. Cette image a un sens bien précis. Elle veut dire que le cinéma s'arrachera peu à peu à cette tyrannie du visuel, de l'image pour l'image, de l'anecdote immédiate, du concret, pour devenir un moyen d'écriture aussi souple et aussi subtil que celui du langage écrit.⁵

Astruc thus proposes that the filmmaker who wields the “camera-pen” to express his ideas is essentially a *writer* in both the literal and the figurative sense of the word. This conception of the cinema as a form of language and/or mode of writing is later reconsidered by important film theorists such as Bazin, Jean Mitry, and Christian Metz, and by prominent filmmakers such as Truffaut and Godard, whose films and essays both reveal a correspondence between the cinema and writing. A master of the so-called film-essay, Godard himself has even stated that “the difference between writing and directing is quantitative not qualitative.”⁶ In fact, a number of New Wave directors were effectively writers for whom the essay and the cinema likewise figured as a means of expression. A predilection for the “graphological trope” and/or “scriptural metaphor” was therefore appropriate for directors who had begun to *write* as journalists. As the film critic Robert Stam observes:

The films by the New Wave directors “embodied” this writerly theory. It is no accident, for example, that Truffaut’s first film, *Les quatre cents coups*, abounds with references to writing [...] – all point to the undergirding trope which subtends his vision of filmmaking. At the same time the New Wave was ambivalent about literature, which was both a model to be emulated, and, in the form of literary scripts and conventional adaptations, the enemy to be abjured.⁷

Such a “vision” of the cinema as a form of language and/or mode of writing inspired the “writerly” concept of the *cinéma d’auteur*, as auteur theory recognized both the stylistic and thematic qualities of directors whose artistic works, in a sense, transcended the industrial process(es) that produced them. Auteurism was thus, according to Stam, “both inspiration and strategic instrument for the filmmakers of the New Wave,” who would advocate the

policy in order to attack the establishment and to “dynamite” a position for a new, modern cinema within a conservative, traditional cinema.⁸ The *auteurs* of Cinema Novo would also incorporate such a policy and/or strategy as directors effectively acted as critics, thereby approximating the art of cinema and the task of writing. Rocha, for instance, was said to film the way he wrote, and *vice versa*, as evident in the creolized language of numerous manifestos such as *Eztetyka da fome* (1965), and of several essays in collections such as *Revolução do cinema novo* (1980) and *O Século do Kynema* (1983). If Astruc had proposed that the filmmaker use the camera as a pen, “o autor aqui usa a caneta como se ela fosse uma câmera de cinema,” according to film critic José Carlos Avellar.⁹ Inspired by the New Wave, Cinema Novo directors and critics would thus embody auteurism to the *letter*.

With the emergence of the *nouvelle vague*, the enactment of a *politique des auteurs* via the production of a corresponding *cinéma d’auteur* would be significant for the Cinema Novo movement not merely for aesthetic but also for political reasons, inasmuch as auteurism established subversive tendencies within a cinematic tradition dominated by a commercial Hollywood and a bourgeois “tradition of quality” that reduced the so-called “seventh art” to prescribed formulas and morality plays.¹⁰ Seeking to capitalize on such a tradition and conquer an international market, a film company was founded in Brazil modelled after the Hollywood studio system. The Companhia Cinematográfica Vera Cruz (1949-1957) succeeded in re-producing not just the themes and genres of American and European cinema, but also the technical quality of an industrial “First World” cinema. The crowning achievement of the Vera Cruz studios was Lima Barreto’s *O cangaceiro* (1953), one of the first Brazilian films to receive worldwide recognition after winning the prize for best “adventure” film at Cannes. Although the film was inspired by the story of the popular



Poster for *O cangaceiro*

folk hero Lampião, a legendary figure of the Brazilian Northeast, it would nonetheless be criticized by Rocha, whose own *Deus e o diabo* revisits the *cangaceiro* motif, for subserviently imitating the American western genre both in its Manichean ideology of “good” *versus* “evil” and in its illusionist aesthetics.¹¹ Rocha’s critique of the false “realism” of the Vera Cruz studios in Brazil recalls, in a sense, Truffaut’s attack of the “psychological realism” in French cinema. Instead of an elitist “tradition of quality,” Rocha would advocate a “*cinema de arte*” based on the virtues and talents of the “*autor*.” Art cinema and auteurism thus acquire a “universal” dimension which for Rocha becomes a pretext for “cultural revolution.” As Rocha observes: “Surgiu o autor e com ele o *Cinema de Arte*. Podemos assim dizer que a luta do *cinema novo* com o público não é uma luta regional mas universal e tem a dimensão de uma revolução cultural.”¹² Rocha is, in fact, reacting to the reception of Cinema Novo films by a public (pre)conditioned by commercial cinema and its standardized conventions in the guise of “expensive, pseudo-industrialised, culturally ‘colonised’ films,” in the words of compatriot director Carlos Diegues.¹³ Ultimately, the development of the “art film” and/or “auteur cinema” is significant not only because of its creative aesthetics or *engagé* politics, but also because it subverts both the cinema industry and the aforementioned tradition of quality:

Em primeira instância, antes de se discutir a significação ideológica ou estética deste ou daquele *filme de arte*, urge considerar que *um filme de autor*, na medida que se opõe ao industrialismo da mentira e da moral rotulada, é *um filme de oposição*, *um filme anticonformista*, um filme que desperta, por si mesmo, a polêmica no seio da indústria estabelecida.¹⁴

Despite the professed admiration for *cinéma d’art* and inspiration from the *politique des auteurs*, Cinema Novo was nonetheless critical of the *nouvelle vague* because of a presumed absence of politics in its aesthetics. According to Diegues: “We were making

political films when the New Wave was still talking about unrequited love.”¹⁵ Rocha, for his part, has declared that *nouvelle vague* aesthetics was bourgeois *par excellence*, which is ironic since it was Truffaut himself who had once lambasted “quality” French cinema by rhetorically asking: “*Quelle est donc la valeur d'un cinéma anti-bourgeois fait par des bourgeois, pour des bourgeois?*”¹⁶ Rocha further asserts that what “exterminated” the French *nouvelle vague* (and its predecessor, Italian *neorealismo*) was the lack of “class consciousness” of its filmmakers.¹⁷ In contrast, Cinema Novo would promote a social revolution adequate to the contemporary historical situation of Latin America. As Rocha asserts: “o cinema novo não projeta uma revolução solitária burguesa nas características da *nouvelle vague*, mas uma revolução social nas exigências do momento em que vive.”¹⁸ In Brazil and Latin America, therefore, what the socio-historical context required was an antidote to the ills of (multinational) capitalism and/or neo-colonial imperialism via the creation of a “popular” national cinema. As in other so-called “Third World” texts, the *auteur* becomes a sort of collective voice, while the art film figures as a form of national allegory.¹⁹

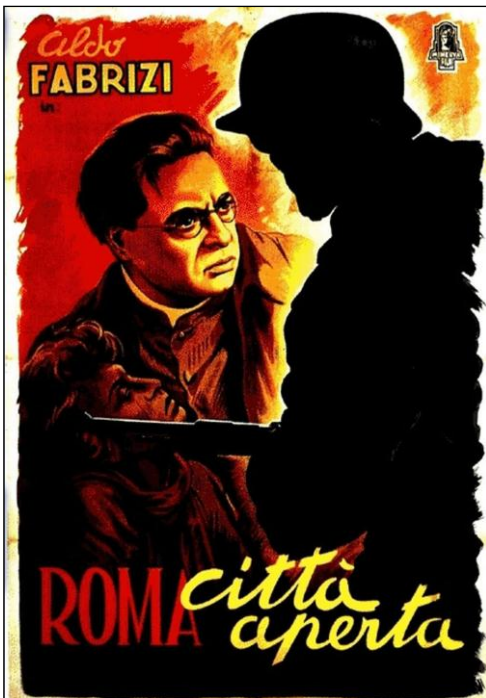
neo-realism

In dialogue with contemporary developments in European cinema, Cinema Novo inaugurated an alternative production strategy and established the role of the *auteur* in Latin America. But while the French *nouvelle vague* enacted the “auteur policy” in both critical essays and films, auteurism itself evolved from the modern cinema of revered filmmakers from previous generations, which included directors from both Hollywood and Europe. Before the advent of the New Wave, the first “new” cinema was the Italian *neorealismo*,

which emerged in the 1940s amidst the ruins of the second World War. Such a scenario pervades Roberto Rossellini's *Roma, città aperta* (*Rome, Open City* – 1945), which together with *Paisà* (1946) and *Germania anno zero* (*Germany Year Zero* – 1948), formed part of the ground-breaking Neo-Realist trilogy that exemplified the new style and its innovative filmmaking techniques. Neo-Realism as such represented a rupture from the illusionistic spectacles of a fascist industrial cinema, and a desire to document the ordinary, quotidian reality of contemporary Italy. The critical foundation for the movement was proposed, in part, by theorist and scriptwriter Cesare Zavattini, whose retrospective essay “Some Ideas on the Cinema” (1952) advocated “a direct approach to everyday reality.”²⁰ Zavattini adds that the significance of Neo-Realism was that it both produced and induced a reflection of reality:

The most important characteristic, and the most important innovation, of what is called neorealism, it seems to me, is to have realised [...] that reality is hugely rich, that to be able to look directly at it is enough; and that the artists' task is not to make people moved or indignant at metaphorical situations, but to make them reflect (and, if you like, to be moved and indignant too) on what they and others are doing, on the real things, exactly as they are.²¹

Neo-Realism thus strove “to excavate reality” in an analytical, documentary-style fashion that sought to record and/or reproduce the essence of a particular historical moment. The cinema was viewed as the only means of expression with the “original and innate capacity for showing things [...] as they happen day by day – in what we might call their ‘dailiness,’ their longest and truest duration.”²² Although reality might have been “rich” enough for cinematographic representation, it was nonetheless poverty that defined the social situation of post-war Italy. As such, cinema's perceived “hunger for reality” would be mirrored in the thematic depiction of the poor and hungry. According to Zavattini: “A starving man, a humiliated man, must be shown by name and surname; no fable for a starving man, because that is something else, less effective and less moral. The true function of the cinema is not to



Poster for *Roma, città aperta*



Poster for *Paisà*



Poster for *Germania anno zero*

tell fables, and to a true function we must recall it.”²³ Here an opposition is assumed and/or proposed between truth and fiction, reality and illusion, which recalls the (dialectical) origins of the cinema itself: the realism of the Lumière brothers *versus* the illusionism of Georges Méliès. For Zavattini, Neo-Realism must evidently tell the truth about life, and poverty constituted “one of the most vital realities of our time.”²⁴ Furthermore, it was “not simply a question of choosing the theme of poverty, but of going on to explore and analyse the poverty.”²⁵ In a sense *hungry* for a new reality, Neo-Realist cinema would not only film the poor and hungry, but would also be filmed within the impoverished technical infrastructure of post-war Italy. Such a “hunger” would later characterize the aesthetics of Cinema Novo, which was likewise charged with documenting a miserable and desperate reality in spite of a lack of economic means for production.

Arising under analogous circumstances of deprivation, Cinema Novo immediately identified itself with both the thematic and stylistic concerns of *neorealismo*, a veritable cinematographic renaissance that constituted both a reflection of the socio-economic reality of Italy and a revolt against the fascist and/or capitalist illusionism of the (pre)dominant film industry. Revolutionary filmmaking techniques were thus employed to convey a sense of realism for both aesthetic and ethical reasons. The innovations of Neo-Realism included the casting of non-professional actors to allow characters to be (or act as) themselves, the use of regional dialects to resemble popular spoken language(s), on-location shooting with lightweight cameras and natural light to faithfully re-present the setting, improvised scripts to simulate authenticity in the action, and finally, long takes and deep focus photography to allow events to unfold in true duration. The aim was to create a cinema of immediacy and verosimilitude, an audiovisual description of the struggles of everyday, working-class life.

By relying as much on artifice as on any apparent naturalness, however, Neo-Realism would paradoxically re-produce an illusion of reality via its characteristic techniques and its (stereo)typical style, which was arguably more varied than uniform. Ultimately, critics such as Bazin would observe that “neorealism is more an ontological position than an aesthetic one,” and that “the employment of its technical attributes like a recipe do not necessarily produce it.”²⁶ Despite his reservations, Bazin defends the use of the term *neo-realist* on the grounds of the perceived “common origin” of the movement within a specifically Italian sociohistorical context.²⁷ If the question for Zavattini was “how to give human life its historical importance at every minute,” or else, how “to take any moment of a human life and show how ‘striking’ that moment is: to excavate and identify it, to send its echo vibrating into other parts of the world,” then Neo-Realism was a cinematographic method that answered a rebellious call to arms. As Zavattini declares, “Neorealism today is an army ready to start; and there are the soldiers – behind Rossellini, de Sica, Visconti. The soldiers have to go into the attack and win the battle.”²⁸ The echoes of such a revolutionary spirit, which was manifestly materialist, would eventually reach the shores of *other* “Latin” (American) countries *hungry* for both social and cultural change via the re-creation of a new, modern, Third World *cinema novo*.

cinema novo

The origins of the “new” cinema(s) of Latin America coincided with the development and propagation of both neo-realism and auteurism in Europe. As early as 1947, the Brazilian film critic Benedito Duarte praised Neo-Realism’s “aesthetic of poverty” for producing a cinema that was poor in technique but rich in imagination.²⁹ Neo-Realist

filmmakers such as Zavattini actually visited countries such as Cuba and Mexico to discuss how to adapt the style or method to a properly Third World context. Inspired by the discourse of Zavattini and by the films of the new Italian cinema, the Brazilian critic-filmmaker Alex Viany would advocate a realist(ic) cinema shot on-location with nonprofessional actors, “popular” themes, and a simplified (cinematographic) language.³⁰ In principle, the “lessons” of Neo-Realism were put into practice in films such as Viany’s own pioneering *Agulha no palheiro* (*Needle in the Haystack* – 1953), and Nelson Pereira dos Santos’ even more significant *Rio 40 graus* (*Rio 100 Degrees F.* – 1955), which was considered to be a precursor to Cinema Novo. As the critics Randal Johnson and Robert Stam assert: “By its independent production and critical stance toward established social structures, this film marked a decisive step toward a new kind of cinema.”³¹ *Rio, 40 graus* exposed in documentary-style the ordinary (albeit dramatized) lives of typical (albeit typified) inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro, a reality often marked by poverty and despair. Perceiving the evident influence of Italian Neo-Realism, Rocha has also remarked on the film’s “revolutionary” impact:

O filme era revolucionário para e no cinema brasileiro. Subverteu os princípios de produção [...] pegando gente na rua e entrando em cenários naturais – o filme respirava os ares do movimento italiano, tinha a decisão de Rossellini, De Sica, De Santis; a técnica não era necessária, porque a verdade estava para ser mostrada e não necessariamente disfarces de arcos, difusores, refletores, lentes especiais.³²

Besides incorporating both the aesthetics and the ethics of *neorealismo*, Nelson Pereira dos Santos exemplified, according to Rocha, the newfound role of the “author” in Brazilian



Poster for *Agulha no palheiro*



Poster for *Rio, 40 graus*

cinema, eventually becoming a sort of “conscience” for the Cinema Novo movement that would follow his lead.³³ The new(est) cinema of Latin America would thus emerge in dialogue with modern European cinema, itself an “unconscious rebellion” against both industrial (capitalist) conventions and social (bourgeois) norms that had erupted first with the *auteurs* of Italian Neo-Realism, and later with the auteurism of the French New Wave.³⁴

Inasmuch as *cinema novo* was inspired by *neorealismo* and the *nouvelle vague*, the pronouncement of another “new” cinema was already, in a sense, old news in Europe. Nonetheless, no similar movement existed in Latin America at the moment, according to Rocha, who thereby classifies the phenomenon as “um novo tipo de cinema: tecnicamente imperfeito, dramaticamente dissonante, poeticamente revoltado, sociologicamente impreciso [...] politicamente agressivo e inseguro [...] violento e triste, muito mais triste que violento.”³⁵ Such characteristics are apparent in the aesthetics of “hunger” and/or “violence” that marks the emergence of Cinema Novo and its “sad, ugly, desperate films” that depicted the drama(s) of both urban and rural poverty.³⁶ Despite the common aesthetics and/or politics of filmmakers associated with the movement, like the “new” European cinemas, Cinema Novo evolved according to the signature styles of individual authors-directors; each and every film was unique, and there was no predominant tendency as such.³⁷ Always *under development*, it was basically a movement *in progress*. As Rocha explains, “*cinema novo* não é uma escola acabada, é um movimento que se faz, se processa, se desenvolve à medida que se realiza [...] para dizer coisas novas precisamos de uma linguagem nova e até mesmo complexa.”³⁸ Rocha’s observations about the need for a “new language” allude to a fundamental problem in the (r)evolution of Cinema Novo as a “new” cinema. With the advent of Modernism and the avant-garde, the question of the “new” would exhibit a

universal dimension in the otherwise marginal discourse of Latin America and the Third World *en bloc* in relation to Europe. As such, a transcultural dialogue is often misconstrued as unilateral and frequently confused with a depreciatory notion of *influence* that betrays an imperialist and/or neo-colonialist misconception on the part of critics. There is nonetheless a certain truth to the preconception of *dependency*, which is the fact of economic underdevelopment. As Cinema Novo director Joaquim Pedro de Andrade readily concedes:

All of us here in Brazil [...] continually receive information from the cultural vanguard throughout the world. We are obviously affected by this information. There is always a degree of interpenetration and communication between the intelligentsia of more developed and less developed countries. This phenomenon is a perennial one.³⁹

Andrade's comments underscore the form of dialogue established between the "new" cinemas of Latin America and Europe, a relation characterized by a process of transculturation, despite his demarcations of "more developed" and "less developed" regions that arguably reinforce the distinction between *metropolis* (Europe) and *periphery* (Latin America). A condition of economic dependency is never a prescription for artistic and/or cultural underdevelopment, however, as Latin American artists and critics have consistently demonstrated in original, creative works such as Andrade's own *O padre e a moça* (*The Priest and the Girl* – 1965), a rural drama which recalls both the religious themes of Luis Buñuel and the ascetic style of Robert Bresson.⁴⁰ By designating a "new" cinema in *passé* terminology, *cinema novo* instead exemplifies the paradoxical situation of (neo)vanguard movements in the New World. The "new" in Cinema Novo is thereby manifest in the form of a dialectics of imitation and originality that is resolved in a creative synthesis of European and (Latin) American traditions. In "Cinema: A Trajectory within Underdevelopment" (1973), the film critic Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes describes such a dialectics in terms of an



Poster for *O pai e a mãe*

identity founded on *difference* and/or *otherness*:

We are neither Europeans nor North Americans. Lacking an original culture, nothing is foreign to us because everything is. The painful construction of ourselves develops within the rarefied dialectic of not being and being someone else. Brazilian film participates in this mechanism by and alters it through our creative incapacity for copying.⁴¹

Rocha likewise formulates the “construction” of a Brazilian *cinema novo* in terms of imitation and originality: “A partir deste conceito de cinema de imitação e de cinema original é que se criou no Brasil o termo *cinema novo*. Mas sobre o *cinema novo* [...] surge um segundo desafio: que linguagem original usar, desde que já se recusou a linguagem de imitação?”⁴² Rocha’s comments about the origins of the term *cinema novo* also (pro)pose another problem for the creation of a “new” cinema in Latin America. If Cinema Novo was to resolve the tension between imitation and originality, the question would then become: what form of (cinematographic) language to employ, other than the language of the cinema itself, a dominant discourse emanating from both Hollywood and Europe? From its very conception, then, Cinema Novo was forced to respond to the “challenge” of formulating a new, original language to express an *other, different* reality.

In its reformulation of the “new,” Cinema Novo as such represented an inherently contradictory movement that (co)incidentally corresponds to the contradictory (pro)position of Latin American (neo)vanguard art and theory in general: both innovative and traditional, modern and primitive, cosmopolitan and nativist, etc. As an example of such contradictions, *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* stages, in a sense, the aforementioned dialectics of a “new” cinema in the New World. As Rocha himself observes:

Deus e o diabo era o resultado de um impacto violento que em mim tinha acontecido naqueles anos entre as informações e o conhecimento que tinha da realidade brasileira, e as informações e conhecimento que estava tendo da

cultura européia [...] A minha contradição, antes, aquela de nós todos, era que procurávamos criar um cinema antropofórico brasileiro, mas tínhamos uma série de referências cinematográficas européias.⁴³

Cinema Novo's attempt to create an authentically Brazilian (or Latin American) cinema was therefore predicated on the existence of European (and American) cinema. There could be no form of originality without imitation, and identity could only be founded upon difference. Such a paradoxical situation is present in both the collective movement as a whole, and in the unique styles of individual filmmakers. As Rocha adds:

No nível de estilo, penso num filme como *Ganga Zumba*, em que Carlos Diegues tentou desenvolver um estilo pessoal. Havia influência de Eisenstein mas se confundia com outras influências [...] Para mim, *Ganga Zumba* é um belo filme brasileiro. Antes e acima de tudo, sob as circunstâncias desta pressão colonialista que pode ser, num certo sentido, um elemento positivo de um ponto de vista dialético.⁴⁴

Rocha's observations suggest, once more, that both the originality and the identity of Cinema Novo arise from a dialectical synthesis of contradictory forces. There is the external pressure of influence, and the internal desire for freedom of expression. Such contradictions in the formation(s) of style are furthermore complemented by contradictions in the formulation(s) of discourse, not only among different films but within each individual film. Joaquim Pedro de Andrade thus aptly summarizes the contradictory identity of the movement:

In our films, the propositions, positions, and ideas are extremely varied, at times even contradictory or at least multiple. Above all they are increasingly free and unmasked. There exists a total freedom of expression. Our films are rich in contradictions; even the most traditional, negative, out-moded, and reactionary ideas can be found in them. All of these elements are transparent in Cinema Novo films.⁴⁵

The transcultural dialogue between the "new" cinemas of Europe and Latin America not only created a contradictory movement in both style and discourse, but also produced a dialectical cinema by combining opposing tendencies within the cinematic tradition itself.

Historically, the evolution of the cinema has been marked, in a sense, by oppositions such as the aforementioned debate between realism (Lumière) and illusionism (Méliès). In terms of the language of the cinema, however, the conflict involves the contradictory conceptions of formalism and realism. Bazin famously distinguished the two “broad and opposing trends” in terms of a “faith in the image” and a “faith in reality.” As such, there was the formalism of cinematography (the art or technique of film photography) and/or montage (the process of film editing) *versus* the realism of mise-en-scène (all that which is “put in the scene” before the camera and within the frame: setting, lighting, staging, costuming, etc.). A prime example of the formalist tendency is the work of revolutionary Russian filmmaker-theorist Sergei Eisenstein, who developed an aesthetic theory of dialectical montage based on the juxtaposition of opposing or contradictory images and/or ideas. For Eisenstein, montage is characterized by “collision,” or by “the conflict of two pieces in opposition to each other.”⁴⁶ Montage is furthermore deemed essential for the cinema as a form of art, inasmuch as the “task” of art is “to make manifest the contradictions of Being. To form equitable views by stirring up contradictions within the spectator’s mind, and to forge accurate intellectual concepts from the dynamic clash of opposing passions.”⁴⁷ Based, in part, on the so-called Kuleshov effect, a film editing technique in which the combination of random, alternating images induces the viewer to *forge* connections between them according to his own emotional (or psychological) reactions, the premise of dialectical (or “intellectual”) montage is that the “dynamic clash” of two opposing (concrete) images is able to create a new (abstract) idea from the synthesis of contradictory ideas. Such an ideological method, which valued symbolism and/or expressionism, represented the culmination of the so-called “cinema of attractions” that was the predominant aesthetic of the silent film era.

With the advent of the sound film, however, another approach to filmmaking would be established that favored naturalism and/or realism. For Bazin, it was the development of deep-focus photography that had caused a “revolution” in the language of the cinema.⁴⁸ In deep-focus photography, all the planes in a shot are simultaneously in focus, from foreground to background, due to the use of a lens with a large depth of field. Deep-focus was popularized in films such as Jean Renoir’s *La règle du jeu* (*Rules of the Game* – 1939) and Orson Welles’ *Citizen Kane* (1941), considered a cinematographic masterpiece by Bazin and other critics alike. While conceding that “montage has added considerably to the progress of film language,” Bazin asserts that “depth of field” was not just another technical advancement, but rather “a dialectical step forward in the history of film language.”⁴⁹ Deep-focus, in addition to affecting “the structure of film language,” inevitably “brings the spectator into a relation with the image closer to that which he enjoys with reality.” As such, he concludes, the structure is more “realistic.”⁵⁰ Opposed to the formalist tendency of Eisenstein, the realist tendency is apparent in the revolutionary aesthetics of Italian Neo-Realism, which “contrasts with previous forms of film realism in its stripping away of all expressionism and in particular in the total absence of the effects of montage,” according to Bazin.⁵¹ By preferring the duration of long takes to frequent cuts and other manipulative editing procedures, Neo-Realism was consequently able to “transfer to the screen the *continuum* of reality.”⁵² When the new realism reached the shores of Latin America, however, formalism was still effectively *en vogue*. As Rocha duly admits: “No princípio, nós éramos muito eisensteinianos. Os primeiros filmes do *cinema novo* eram bastante eisensteinianos. É que nós sofriamos ainda de inúmeros complexos colonialistas. Todo mundo falava de Bazin. Nos tornamos então discursivos.”⁵³ Ever receptive to the various



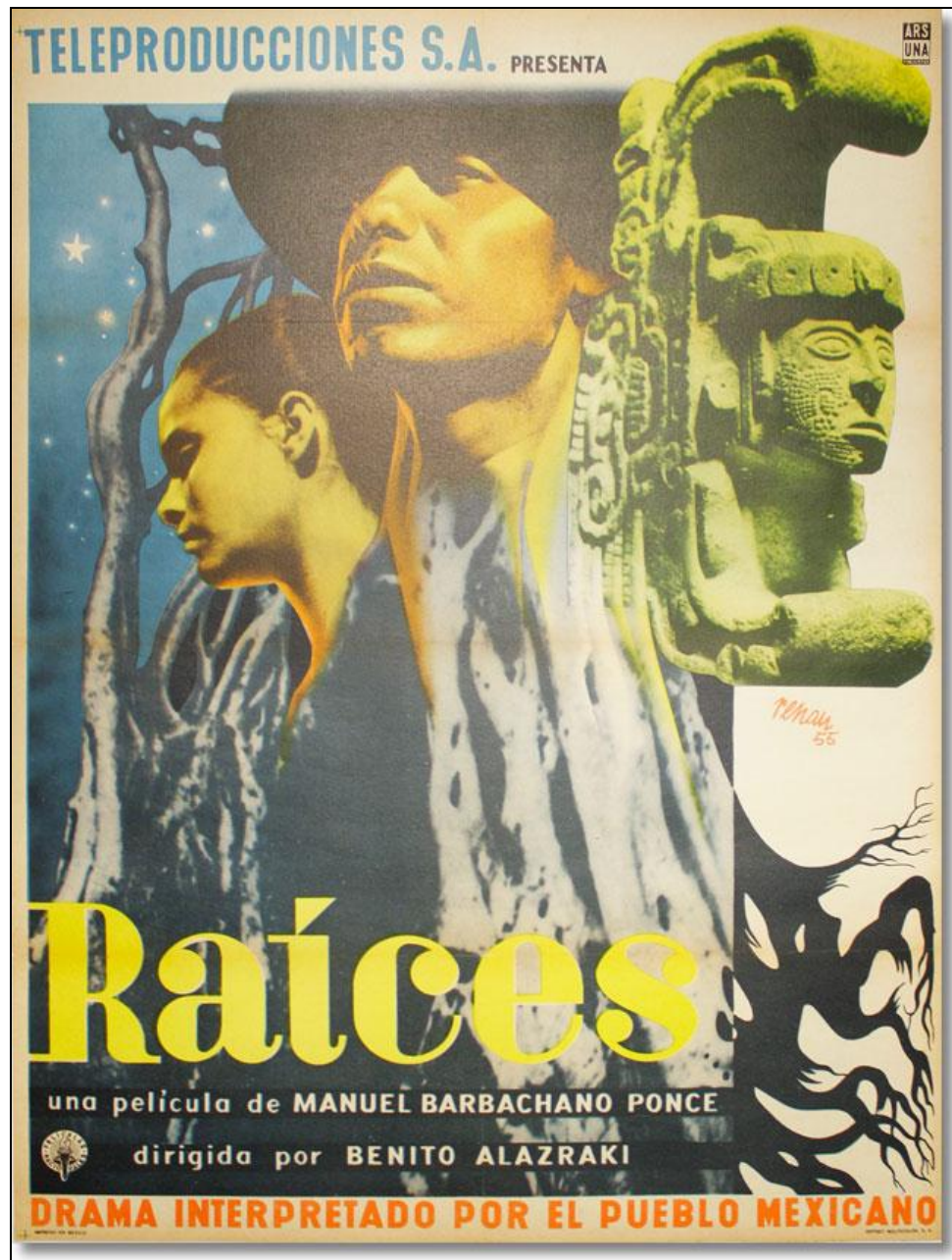
Poster for *La règle du jeu*



Poster for *Citizen Kane*

revolutions in world cinema, Cinema Novo would thus arise, both in theory and in practice, from an oscillation between the symbolic-expressionism of Eisenstein and the dramatic-realism of Bazin.

An original combination of formalism and realism therefore describes the appearance of a new Latin American cinema on the international scene. In an early critical essay, Rocha foresees the promise of such a new cinema in Mexican filmmaker and screenwriter Benito Alazraki's *Raíces* (*Roots* – 1954), a film whose “resolution” was said to provoke “um choque de duas tendências altamente antagônicas: o ‘antiformalismo’ seco do *neo-realismo* ante a ‘ultra-expressão’ eisensteiniana.”⁵⁴ The “shock” or tension between supposedly contradictory tendencies itself represents the effect of a dialectical process that complements the dialogical interrelations between Latin American and European cinemas. Such a process would effectively prescribe the conditions of possibility for the form(ul)ation of a “new” cinema from the synthesis of otherwise incompatible trends. As Rocha concludes, “a intenção de Benito Alazraki poderia resultar, inclusive, em um filme de talvez máxima importância, posto que síntese de duas tendências antagônicas e culminantes em fases vitais do desenvolvimento do pensamento universal cinematográfico.”⁵⁵ A fusion of Russian formalism and Italian neorealism might thereby produce a new form of cinematography founded upon contradictory tendencies that had each reached a point of “culmination” in the evolution of the cinema. In theory, Rocha had predicted that, according to Stam, a “Latin American film language could be invented on the basis of a fusion of two apparently antagonistic models proposed by Eisenstein and Zavattini.”⁵⁶ In practice, Rocha's own *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* would fulfill the promise of the new cinema he envisaged, with its dialectics of “rarefaction-excess” and/or “scarcity and saturation” produced via the



Poster for *Raíces*

alternation of protracted long take sequences and (steno)graphic montage sequences.⁵⁷

With its conjunction of opposing cinematic trends or tendencies, Cinema Novo would represent yet another “dialectical step forward” in the history of “film language” by inaugurating a new style that synthesized formalist montage and realist *mise-en-scène*. The invention of a Latin American “film language” allowed filmmakers to *say* new things that were otherwise left unsaid, and thus became the condition of possibility for the expression of an *other, different* reality than that expressed by European and/or American cinema. As a means of expression, the cinema may once more be conceived as analogous to a form of language and/or mode of writing. Echoing recent developments in semiotics, and reflecting certain affinities with auteurism, Rocha relates the cinematographic and linguistic processes of creation in terms of formal “structure:”

O processo de criação cinematográfico é igual ao processo lingüístico. E algo arbitrário como são as palavras, que de um para outro idioma mudam arbitrariamente de significado. Ainda que façamos um exame da estrutura de cada linguagem, encontraremos um processo de eleição desses significantes e sua evolução em cada povo.⁵⁸

Although the two processes are related, cinematography is nonetheless differentiated from linguistics in terms of *complexity*:

No cinema, está-se muito no campo de uma estrutura complexa que abarca organização de montagem, de pensamento mais do que de cenários, porque a capacidade dos planos cinematográficos – a *mise-en-scène* – composição de câmera e lente, é uma posição limitada [...] Agora, o que o cineasta precisa é de *articulação* das estruturas e, para isto, entendê-las, examinar as estruturas sociais, dramáticas etc. dos complexos do filme e demais componentes. A isso tudo soma-se a motivação poética.⁵⁹

For Rocha, therefore, the cinema constitutes a “complex” language whose structure is primarily based on montage, which ultimately realizes the potential for signification of the *mise-en-scène*. If the medium is (also) the message, the cinema should furthermore

communicate itself, in itself, thereby becoming a meta-discourse that “articulates” its own structure as well as the content of the fiction and/or reality it represents.

Rocha’s description of the interrelations between cinematography and linguistics, the latter of which he considers to be “uma ciência importantíssima para entender no cinema,” is actually a prescription for the “articulation” of an original Latin American cinema.⁶⁰ The filmmaker must tell his story in his own language. But what form of language is represented by the cinema, and how might such a language be written? As Rocha himself writes: “A imagem, rigorosamente, deve ser um vocábulo, e o cineasta deve escrever com a imagem [...] Como o ideograma japonês e como o hieróglifo egípcio, o cinema é uma linguagem.”⁶¹ Like the aforementioned *auteurs* and film theorists who have employed the “graphological trope” and/or “scriptural metaphor,” Rocha perceives the fundamental relations between cinema and writing. By proposing that the filmmaker should “write” with images, his words not only recall Astruc’s *camera-stylo*, but also Eisenstein’s theories of montage, which were actually based on principles inherent in both the Chinese ideogram and the Japanese haiku. In “The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram” (1929), Eisenstein explains how the combination of two otherwise iconic signs, which depict concrete things and/or objects, in turn produces an ideographic sign, which represents an abstract idea and/or concept:

The point is that the copulation (perhaps we had better say, the combination) of two hieroglyphs of the simplest series is to be regarded not as their sum, but as their product, i.e. as a value of another dimension, another degree; each, separately, corresponds to an *object*, to a fact, but their combination corresponds to a *concept*. From separate objects has been fused – the ideogram. By the combination of two “depictables” is achieved the representation of something that is graphically undepictable.⁶²

After providing a series of examples to illustrate his point (water + eye = to weep; ear + door = to listen; dog + mouth = to bark; mouth + child = to scream; mouth + bird = to sing; knife +

heart = sorrow), Eisenstein observes that this process “is exactly what we do in the cinema, combining shots that are *depictive*, single in meaning, neutral in content – into *intellectual* contexts and series.”⁶³ In principle, therefore, montage creates ideas from the association of shots just as the ideogram signifies concepts from the juxtaposition of images. As such, montage is both “a means and method inevitable in any cinematographic exposition,” according to Eisenstein.⁶⁴ The cinematographic mode of “exposition,” as form(ulat)ed via montage, develops not by the discursive, logical process that is typical of narrative but by the non-discursive, analogical procedure that is characteristic of poetry, as exemplified by the Japanese *tanka* and *haikai*, which are seen and/or read by Eisenstein as “little more than hieroglyphs transposed into phrases. So much so that half of their quality is appraised by their calligraphy. The method of their resolution is completely analogous to the structure of the ideogram.”⁶⁵ Such literary “imagery,” or such an “*imagist* effect,” is in turn analogous to the effect(s) of montage in the cinema. As examples, Eisenstein cites a number of poems, such as the following haiku by Bashō:

A lonely crow
On leafless bough,
One autumn

Bashō’s poem presents two concrete images whose interrelation represents an abstract concept: the idea of a season associated with solitude. Such a form of (re)presentation would be equally effective in the cinema. From Eisenstein’s point of view, “these are montage phrases. Shot lists. The simple combination of two or three details of a material kind yields

a perfectly finished representation of another kind – psychological.”⁶⁶ Just as the aforementioned Kuleshov effect induces “psychological” reactions from the spectator, Eisenstein’s (dialectal) montage produces an “intellectual” cinema based on the (ideological) power of associations. Inasmuch as the structure of montage corresponds to the principle of the ideogram, the cinema may not only be defined as “an aesthetic form (just like literature), exploiting images which are (in and of themselves) *means of expression* whose extension (i.e., logical and dialectical organization) is *language*,” according to Mitry, but also described as “a new form of ideographic writing.”⁶⁷

Although preconditioned by Eisenstein’s theories of montage, Cinema Novo would also be predisposed to Bazin’s theories of *mise-en-scène*, which were formulated, in part, on the basis of Rossellini’s neorealism.⁶⁸ With the aforementioned “revolution” in the language of the cinema, a “faith in the image,” characterized by editing and/or cutting, had been replaced by a “faith in reality,” characterized by long takes and/or sequence shots, as the tendency of symbolic-expressionism was succeeded by that of dramatic-realism. For Bazin, realism in the cinema is founded on the “ontology” of the photographic image, its objective re-presentation of reality itself. But if the “cinema is also a language,” it is effectively more akin to the literary genres of the theater and the novel.⁶⁹ Bazin thus compares the film to the drama, “the cinema being of its essence a dramaturgy of Nature.”⁷⁰ Inasmuch as a play is the realization of a written *script*, the filmic adaptation of a drama requires “the grafting of the theatrical text onto the decor of cinema,” its transcription onto the *mise-en-scène*.⁷¹ Such a form of intersemiotic transposition also describes the interrelations between the novel and the cinema. In discussing the filmic adaptation of literature, Bazin considers the “written reality” of the text as the basis for translation.⁷² The cinema, as such, rewrites the novel in another

language, via a different means of expression. Eventually, Bazin foresees that “novels will be written directly onto film.”⁷³ Inasmuch as both the theater and the novel constitute *texts* that represent reality and/or the world, the cinema is therefore “also” a form of language and/or mode of writing. In considering the evolution of the “language of the cinema,” Bazin finally observes how the new realism recalls the actual origins of the cinema, before the advent of montage, and thereby uncovers “the secret of a film form that would permit everything to be said without chopping the world up into little fragments, that would reveal the hidden meanings in people and things without disturbing the unity natural to them.”⁷⁴ Since such a “form” of cinematographic language reveals the significance of things via the re-presentation of (inter)actions within the *mise-en-scène*, “the secret of the regeneration of realism in storytelling” consequently derives from the capacity of the cinema to, once more, draw together “real time, in which things exist, along with the duration of the action.”⁷⁵ Ultimately, a “reborn” realism does not renounce “the conquests of montage,” according to Bazin, but rather “gives them a body of reference and a meaning. It is only an increased realism of the image that can support the abstraction of montage.”⁷⁶ By means of both montage and *mise-en-scène*, the filmmaker creates a (fictional) world and thereby writes his story in images:

Today we can say that at last the director writes in film. The image – its plastic composition and the way it is set in time, because it is founded on a much higher degree of realism – has at its disposal more means of manipulating reality and of modifying it from within. The film-maker is no longer the competitor of the painter and the playwright, he is, at last, the equal of the novelist.⁷⁷

In dialogue with the evolution of the language of the (European) cinema, the revolution of a new (Latin American) cinema would, in effect, constitute a dialectical synthesis of opposing conceptions of the cinema as a form of language and/or mode of

writing. Eisenstein conceived of (formalist) montage in relation to the ideogram and (haiku) poetry, while Bazin conceived of (realist) mise-en-scène in relation to theater and the novel. Following the influential film criticism of the *Cahiers du Cinéma* in the 1950s, the rise of semiology during the 1960s would produce a significant impact on filmology that would in turn (pro)pose a series of questions and/or problems for the *auteurs* of the new cinema(s) in both Europe and Latin America. In *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma* (*The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema* – 1963), Mitry explores the relations between the cinema and language, word and image, from both an aesthetic and a semiological point of view. For Mitry, the analogy between the cinema and writing is based on a conception of the cinematographic medium as a means of expression of ideas via images that ultimately figure as *signs*. In the reproduction of reality via the image, reality as such is no longer “represented” but “*presented*,” according to Mitry, inasmuch as “reality becomes employed as an element of its own narration.”⁷⁸ If the art of cinema is primarily a “means of expression,” it is secondarily a “language” in a very *real* sense.⁷⁹

A film is something other than a system of signs and symbols (at least it does not present itself as that *exclusively*). A film *first and foremost* comprises images, images *of something*. A system of images whose purpose is to describe, develop, and narrate an event or series of events. However, these images – according to the chosen narrative – become organized into a system of signs and symbols; *in addition* they become (or have the possibility of becoming) signs. They are not uniquely signs, like words, but first and foremost objects and concrete reality, objects which take on (or are given) a predetermined meaning. It is in this way that the cinema is a language; it *becomes* language to the extent that it is *first of all* representation and by virtue of that representation. It is, so to speak, a language in the second degree.⁸⁰

As a “system of images” that in turn becomes “a system of signs and symbols,” the cinema is analogous to a language. For Metz, the question would thereby become: is the cinema a language (*langage*) or a language system (*langue*)? In “Le Cinema: langue ou langage?”

(“The Cinema: Language or Language System?” – 1964), Metz rejects a formalist notion of the cinema as a language “system” and affirms a realist conception of cinematographic language. Differentiating between the historical roles of “film montage” and “film narrativity,” which are said to be the “consequences” of two “poles” or tendencies, Metz asserts that “the cinema is language, *above and beyond any particular effect of montage*. It is not because the cinema is language that it can tell such fine stories, but rather it has become language because it has told such fine stories.”⁸¹ In relation to both linguistics and literature, then, the cinema is not only a form of language but also a mode of “writing:”

Among the theoreticians and film-makers who have moved the cinema away from the spectacle to bring it closer to a novelistic “writing” capable of expressing everything – its author as well as the world – of repeating and sometimes replacing the novel in the multiple task it had assumed since the nineteenth century, we find precisely, and by no accident, many of those who are the least concerned with “cinematographic syntax” and who have said so, not without talent at times, in their articles (Bazin, Leenhardt, Astruc, Truffaut) or have shown so in their films (Antonioni, Visconti, Godard, Truffaut) [...] I have mentioned Antonioni, Visconti, Godard, and Truffaut because, of the directors having a style, they seem to me to belong among those, furthermore, in whom one can most clearly see the change from the will to system to the desire for language.⁸²

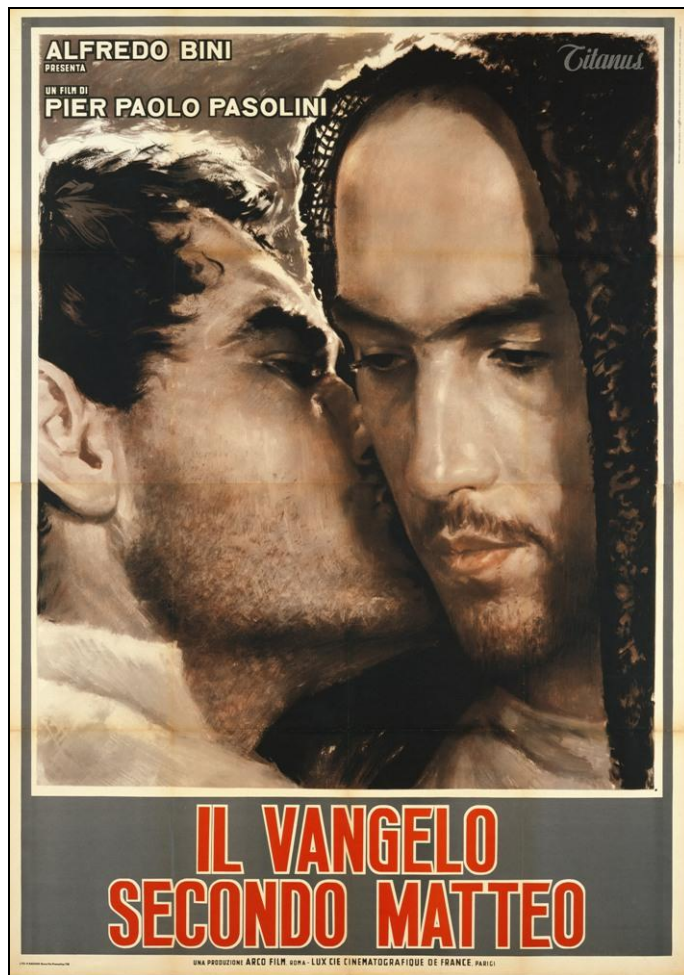
An instance of an important filmmaker *and* theoretician who explores the language and/or writing of the cinema is the Italian director and writer Pier Paolo Pasolini, who would respond to Metz by developing his own semiotics that aimed to describe the relations between the cinema and reality. For Pasolini, the cinema becomes a *medium* for the perception and/or conception of a reality that is, in and of itself, a “natural” language with “cultural” significance:

As long as the language of reality was natural it remained outside our consciousness: now, through cinema, that it appears to us in “written” form it demands a place in our consciousness. The written language of reality will enable us to know above all what the language of reality is. Finally, it will

end up by modifying our thoughts about it and will turn our physical relations, at least with reality, into cultural relations.⁸³

As envisaged by Pasolini, who had been inspired by both Neo-Realism and the New Wave, the cinema ultimately becomes, in a sense, “the written language of reality,” a mode of writing in images that modifies ideas about reality and transforms natural relations into cultural relations.

The transcultural dialogue between a Brazilian Cinema Novo and both an Italian Neo-Realism and a French New Wave is (co)incidentally apparent between Rocha and Pasolini, as evident in essays and films such *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* and *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew* – 1964), whose figure of Christ would be seen and/or read as a “spokesman” for a “new” morality: *a moral do homem subdesenvolvido consciente*.⁸⁴ Such a figure, who is said to represent “*o homem subdesenvolvido*” and/or “*o homem colonizado*,” would, as such, correspond to the revolutionary figure(s) of the *sertão* in terms of the “tribal, barbaric identities” common to both films.⁸⁵ If, for Pasolini, the cinema had revealed the language of reality, for Rocha, the language of the cinema had nonetheless reached the apex of its development, inducing the cinema to re(dis)cover its “true” origins and ends. Thus, “depois de esgotar as suas possibilidades de linguagem, depois de Welles, depois de todo esse itinerário formalista e de pesquisa, e por causa desse itinerário, o cinema chega a esse *cinema-verdade* a essa depuração.”⁸⁶ Rocha’s observations paraphrase and elaborate an argument made by compatriot Cinema Novo director Gustavo Dahl, who said that once the cinema exhausts its cinematographic possibilities, the question passes from one of aesthetics to ethics.⁸⁷ In accordance with Bazin, the argument was that realist techniques (handheld cameras, location shooting, natural light, direct sound, etc.), in contrast with the alienating aesthetic effects of formalism and/or illusionism, reveal an ethical commitment to



Poster for *Il vangelo secondo Matteo*

re-presenting the “truth.” A “faith in reality,” not a “faith in the image,” therefore becomes a prerequisite for a so-called “cinema-truth” which, in a sense, would constitute the ultimate realization of realism.

Rocha’s allusion to *cinéma-vérité*, a movement contemporary to both the *nouvelle vague* and *cinema novo*, refers to a tradition of documentary filmmaking that originated with Lumière and culminated in Godard, in whose film-essays Rocha perceives the same “simplicity” and “depuration.” But if Godard’s filmography, along with that of pioneer *cinéma-vérité* filmmakers such as Chris Marker and Jean Rouch, were to serve as examples, then montage editing and otherwise formalist techniques would be equally relevant for the exposition of cinematic “truth,” inasmuch as such methods analyze and/or interpret “reality.” Such was the basis for the revolutionary Russian filmmaker Dziga Vertov’s *Kino-Pravda* (“Cinema Truth” – 1922-1925), a film-periodical or series of newsreels which utilized constructivist techniques and a Marxist dialectics in order to organize fragments of documented reality, as seen through the mechanical lens of the “Kino-Eye,” so as to metaphorically capture the “truth.”⁸⁸ The camera as such becomes both an objective “eye” and a subjective “I” for Vertov, who in a manifesto writes that “I, a machine, show you a world such as only I can see.”⁸⁹ Truth must nonetheless be constructed, however, since the camera in effect re-produces a world in parts. According to Vertov, “it is not enough to show bits of truth on the screen, separate frames of truth. These frames must be thematically organized so that the whole is also a truth.”⁹⁰ As the documentary tradition of “truth” developed, it would oscillate between formalist and realist techniques and/or tendencies, thereby following the evolution of the language of the cinema. For its part, the term *cinéma vérité* was actually a literal translation of *Kino-Pravda* by the sociologist Edgar Morin, who

along with the anthropologist Rouch would incorporate Vertov's theories in the innovative documentary *Chronique d'un été* (*Chronicle of a Summer* – 1960). Godard, for his part, would later form the Dziga Vertov Group during his anti-auteur, anti-bourgeois phase of the late 1960s, which called for the de(con)struction of the cinema itself. For the development of *cinéma vérité*, then, the abstractions of formalism are therefore complementary to the concretions of realism, inasmuch as the “truth” is essentially an idea, and not merely documentation. As Rocha argues:

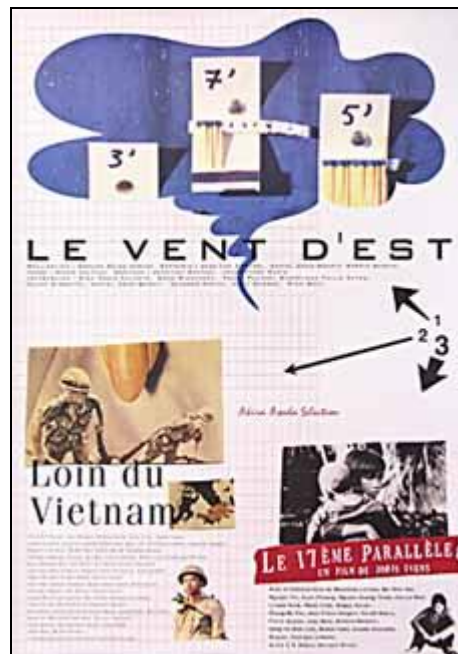
Quando o autor chega às abstrações, quando tira o óbvio, o que não é importante, quando chega ao cerne do problema e realiza uma idéia, então ele está fazendo um filme real, um filme-verdade, seja ele documentário ou de ficção O que o *cinema-verdade* necessita, não só o *cinema-verdade*, mas o cinema moderno, esse cinema de desalienação, é o rigor intelectual e a aplicação exata das idéias.⁹¹

Commenting on Godard, Rocha asserts that “cinema-truth” includes both documentaries and fiction, as he expands the problem of truth, or reality, to apply to modern cinema in general, with particular relevance to the emergence and development of “new” cinemas such as the *nouvelle vague* and *cinema novo*. In the end, as Paulo César Saraceni observes, “*cinema novo* não é uma questão de idade; é uma questão de verdade.”⁹² A dialectical synthesis of formalism and realism, “cinema-truth” is ultimately an “intellectual” cinema of ideas.

If, in Latin America, the most visible and/or vocal proponent of a “dialectical cinema” was Rocha, in Europe, the principal exponent was Godard, with whom Rocha maintained a significant dialogue throughout the 1960s. In fact, the multiple transcultural relations between Godard and Rocha range from aesthetics to politics, including both style and substance. The most direct encounter between the two prominent and polemical figures was in *Vent d'est* (*Wind from the East* – 1969), a radical film directed by the Dziga Vertov Group which featured Rocha himself at the metaphorical crossroads of a revolutionary



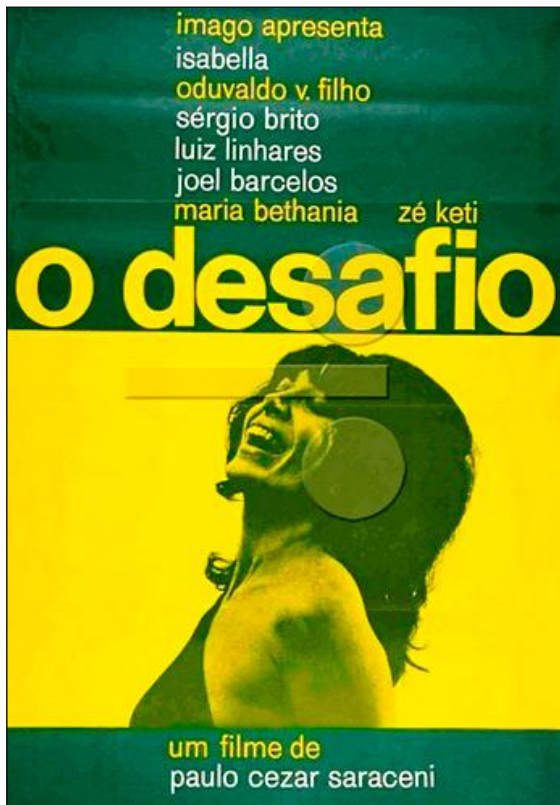
Poster for *Chronique d'une été*



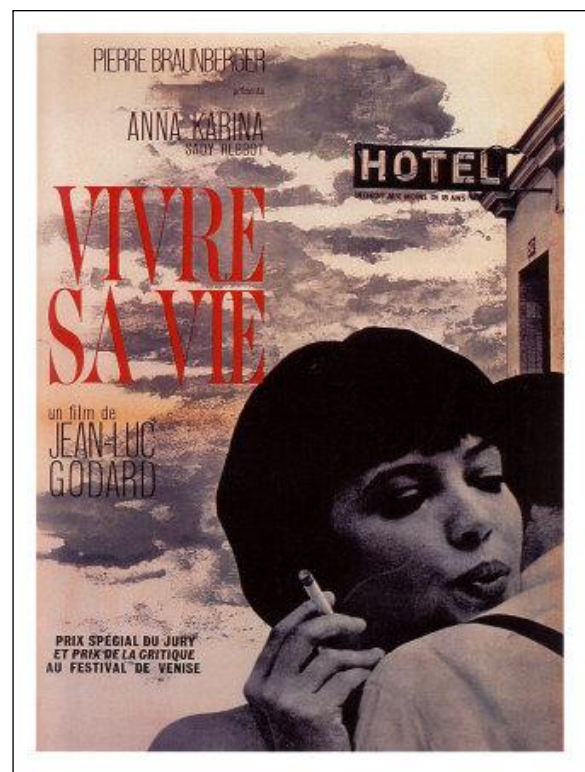
Poster for *Le vent d'est*

cinema. In the scene a woman with a camera in hand asks Rocha the way to a political cinema, and Rocha replies by indicating the “unknown” paths of both a *cinéma d’art* and a *cinema novo*. In Rocha’s words: “Por ali é o cinema desconhecido da aventura estética e especulação filosófica (e etc.); por aqui é o caminho do Terceiro Mundo, um cinema perigoso, divino, e maravilhoso e aqui as questões são práticas.”⁹³ On the one hand there was an “adventurous” cinema that was on the road to de(con)struction, on the other hand there was a “pragmatic” cinema that was opening avenues for production. Seduced by the exotic possibilities in the latter, the woman begins to take the path of Third World cinema but ultimately abandons it in order to follow that of the First World, an action that in itself formulates Godard’s own response to Rocha: a European “materialist” (i.e. dialectical) cinema may interrogate, but not follow, the way of Third World cinema.⁹⁴ Godard’s task thereby becomes to return to his specific reality, or “situation concrète,” and struggle against “le concept bourgeois de représentation.”⁹⁵

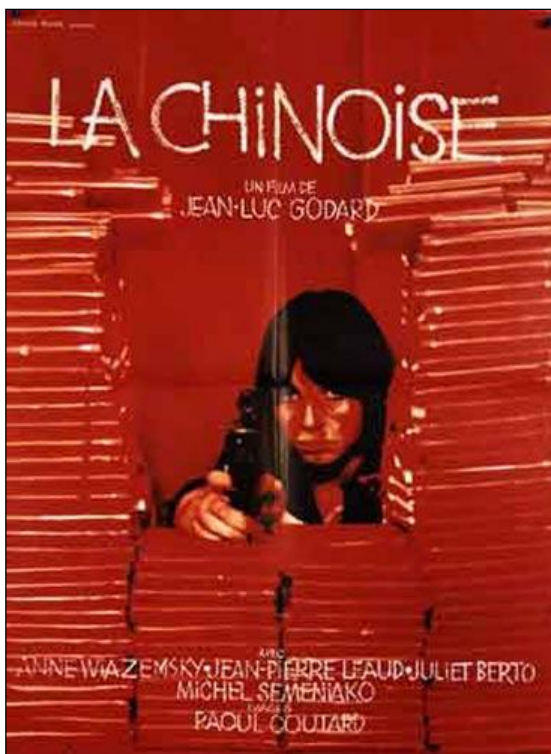
Despite the impact of the New Wave on Cinema Novo, Rocha has maintained that the politicization of Godard’s cinema arose after his “discovery” of Paulo César Saraceni’s *O Desafio* (*The Dare* – 1965), which then led to Godard’s *La Chinoise* (1967), which would in turn influence Rocha’s *O dragão da maldade contra o santo guerreiro* (*Antonio das Mortes* – 1969).⁹⁶ Whether or not such an account is entirely accurate, the fact is that Godard was an important model for Cinema Novo filmmakers. As Rocha readily observes: “As tendências do *cinema novo*, que reúne à descoberta intuitiva do real de Rossellini a dialética de montagem de Eisenstein, encontra em Godard o seu primeiro expoente.”⁹⁷ For Rocha, Godard is exemplary for his innovative combination of realism and formalism, being the first truly “dialectical” filmmaker after Eisenstein.⁹⁸ Inasmuch as dialectical montage is a



Poster for *O desafio*



Poster for *Vivre sa vie*

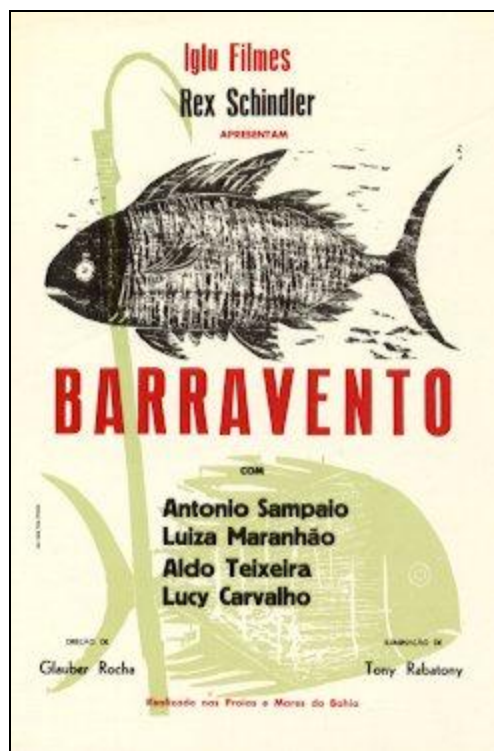


Poster for *La chinoise*

formalist technique *par excellence*, Rocha ultimately reads Godard's filmography in terms of its evident "structuralism," (pro)posing an analogy between modernist cinema and the modernist literature of James Joyce, whose incorporation of montage and other cinematic techniques in experimental works such as *Ulysses* would draw admiration from Eisenstein himself. According to Rocha, "a montagem dialética deve começar pela análise das estruturas. E em *À bout de souffle*, Godard pulveriza joyceanamente as estruturas mas só começa a comunicá-las, com interrupções, em *Vivre sa vie*, embora nos outros filmes já vejamos pelo menos as estruturas expostas."⁹⁹ The development of Rocha's own filmography appears to run parallel to Godard's in terms of form, as both appeared to follow a progressive tendency away from montage editing towards exploring a dialectical approach (or method) in the traditional sequence shot, thereby privileging the capacity for signification inherent in the *mise-en-scène*.¹⁰⁰ Rocha terms this shot, in which there is an "accumulation of contradictions" within the scene itself, the "*plano integral*," a technique that utilizes one single take for each and every action and/or idea ("*um plano para cada ação ou uma idéia para cada plano*").¹⁰¹ As Rocha observes, "a conquista da nova linguagem está no início, mas o estágio da descoberta da realidade pela câmera na mão já se supera pelo estágio da análise da realidade pelo plano integral."¹⁰² In the evolution of the "new language" of the cinema, an otherwise realist technique paradoxically becomes more formalist, as "reality" itself is composed for critical analysis.

Despite the variations and evolutions in technique(s), the "new language" of the cinema, representing not only a reflection *of* reality, but a reflection *on* reality, was marked by both a "documentary" style and a "dialectical" method. Cinema Novo exemplified such developments in both theory and practice, as can be seen in Rocha's own filmography. In

Barravento (*The Turning Wind* – 1962), the influence of Eisenstein is informed by the discovery of Rossellini, creating a fusion of formalism and realism that resulted in a “documentary” about the social alienation of an Afro-Brazilian fishing village in the Northeast, a “direct cinema” in which the characters re-enact themselves and their own (inter)actions.¹⁰³ If *Deus e o diabo* is likewise documentary in terms of cinematographic techniques (handheld cameras, non-professional actors, location shooting), it is also dialectical both in terms of its formal use of (expressionistic) montage and in terms of the thematic conflict between the *beatos* and the *cangaceiros*, a tension which was conceived as a synthesis of a concrete historical situation.¹⁰⁴ Narrated in the style of folkloric *cordel* literature, the story represents both the “truth” and an “imagination” of history. Rocha himself has stated that *Terra em transe* (*Land in Anguish* – 1967), a tropicalist allegory of the class tensions and revolutionary struggles that marked the sociopolitical reality of Brazil and/or Latin America at the time, is a “dialectical” film, in addition to figuring as a “true” cinema with a documentary style.¹⁰⁵ As Rocha admits, “o filme foi freqüentemente filmado com a câmera na mão, de modo flexível. Sente-se a pele dos personagens; procurei um tom documentário. Tudo o que pode parecer *imaginário* é de fato *verdadeiro*.”¹⁰⁶ In contrast, the signature usage of handheld cameras in *O dragão da maldade* (*Antônio das Mortes* – 1969), which revisits the themes and characters of *Deus e o diabo*, is complemented by the aforementioned incorporation of the *plano integral*. According to Rocha: “Filmei planos densos do ponto de vista informativo. Alguns são talvez bastante densos, mas não quis suprimir estas informações, pretendi fazer o contrário de *Terra em transe*, estabelecer outras relações dialéticas entre a montagem e o monólogo.”¹⁰⁷ In Rocha’s films, then, documentary techniques are always accompanied by a dialectical approach. When all is said and done, it



Poster for *Barravento*

is an *idea* of reality, in addition to the *camera* that re-produces it, which captures the *truth* re-presented by the “new” cinema.

In its transcultural dialogue with the “new” cinema(s) of Europe, Cinema Novo was at the vanguard of the evolution of a new cinematographic language, which in Latin America produced a revolutionary cinema. The innovative formula prescribed both a documentary style and a dialectical method: *a camera in hand*, and an *idea in the head*. Although the representation of reality via the *mise-en-scène* signifies in and of itself, the organization of cinematographic images via montage creates new meanings and ideas by the power of association. In the end, *images* of reality are re-produced according to *ideas* of reality in order to tell the *truth* about reality, as aesthetics and ethics effectively converge into a national cinema with a social discourse. As Rocha declares:

No Brasil o *cinema novo* é uma questão de verdade e não de fotografismo. Para nós a câmera é um olho sobre o mundo, o *travelling* é um instrumento de conhecimento, a montagem não é demagógica mas pontuação do nosso ambicioso discurso sobre a realidade humana e social do Brasil!¹⁰⁸

Cinema Novo thus constitutes a “true” cinematographic discourse that both depicts and describes an essentially Latin American reality. Although such an “ambitious” discourse is formulated by means of sad, ugly, or desperate stories, it is history itself that is represented in the form of what otherwise constitute “allegories of underdevelopment,” according to critic Ismail Xavier, who considers poverty to be emblematic of the Brazilian socioeconomic condition. Recognizing the relations to *cinéma d’art* while restating Rocha’s remarks about “truth” in Cinema Novo, Xavier observes that the movement “gave political meaning to the demands for authenticity typical of the European art cinema, combining those demands with the careful observation of reality.”¹⁰⁹ Such a combination of art and politics was manifested

in a type of allegorical language, characteristic of *other* Third World texts, which ultimately differentiates the new Latin American cinema from its European counterpart(s).

Inasmuch as Cinema Novo represents a form of (national) allegory, it figures as a mode of discourse which is founded on the *difference* and/or *otherness* that is emblematic of Latin American art and/or culture in general. In order to formulate his conception of Cinema Novo as “allegories of underdevelopment,” Xavier refers to the work of critic Fredric Jameson, whose seminal essay “Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism” (1986) categorically postulates an allegorical quality specific to “Third World” cultural productions, which are universally marginalized by both the capitalist “First World” and the socialist “Second World,” in terms of the “radical difference” of what otherwise constitute “non-canonical texts.”¹¹⁰ According to Jameson:

All third-world texts are necessarily, I want to argue, allegorical, and in a very specific way: they are to be read as what I will call *national allegories*, even when, or perhaps I should say, particularly when their forms develop out of predominantly western machineries of representation, such as the novel.¹¹¹

Although Jameson is specifically referring to literature, his argument equally applies to the cinema, which, as a form of language and/or mode of writing, may also be seen and/or read as a “text.” Furthermore, the cinematic industry constitutes a “machinery” of representation *par excellence*, while the language of Third World cinema evidently developed from both the American and European cinemas. The “radical difference” is that Third World literature and/or cinema consciously combines aesthetics and politics in such a way that the particular drama(s) of the individual represent(s) that of the entire collective, in contrast to the perceived “radical split between the private and the public, the poetic and the political,” that is generally the *status quo* in capitalist cultures. As Jameson argues:

Third world texts, even those which are seemingly private [...] necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: *the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society.*¹¹²

Despite the numerous and justifiable objections to Jameson's overly schematic reading of "Third World texts," which problematically links economic dependency and/or underdevelopment to the production of "outmoded" and/or "unmodern" cultural manifestations, the notion of (national) allegory is reelaborated by Xavier to describe a significant characteristic of Cinema Novo that is evident in a number of films, especially in Rocha's filmography. In the Latin American historical context of the 1960s, allegorical modes of representation were seen as an effective means of expression in a critical moment of transition, allegory being "the language of crisis par excellence," according to Xavier, who observes how such a mode of writing resolves the "dilemmas" of Cinema Novo filmmakers:

For an art that faces such dilemmas, the image of the world becomes complex, and the tendency is [...] to allegorize, that is, to condense an endless number of questions and experiences into a few individual characters whose life courses, nevertheless, represent a national fate, the destiny of an ethnic group or class.¹¹³

Allegory in Cinema Novo is thus formulated via "emblematic characters," who become (stereo)types of social figures and/or forces, and via "the condensed representation of history," whose complex discourse is *writ* with a multiplicity of tensions, contradictions, and conflicts that unfold both temporally and spatially within a concrete historical context. An allegorical cinema allows for not only the expression of such a multiplicity, but also the narration of an *other, different* story altogether: the history of a "nation" and/or culture. As Xavier observes:

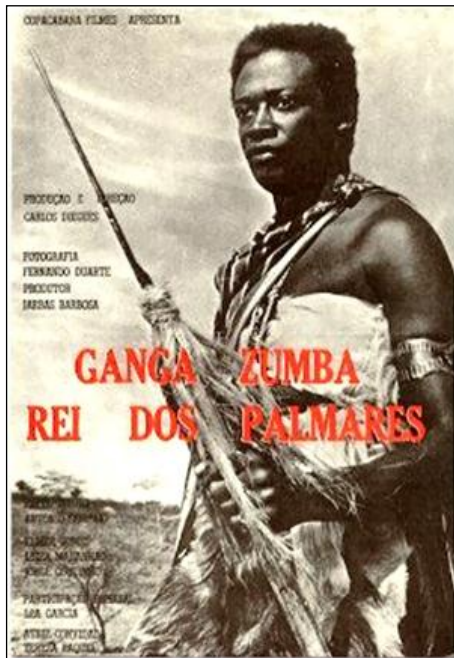
In allegory, the narrative texture places the spectator in an analytical posture while he or she is facing a coded message that is referred to an "other scene" and not directly given on the diegetic level. The spectator's willingness to

decode finds anchorage when this “other scene” is signalized as being the national context as a whole.¹¹⁴

Written in an allegorical code of *otherness*, the text itself signals the (historical) context as the cinema represents an “other scene.” Inasmuch as the Brazilian and/or Latin American reality is marked by poverty and/or economic dependency, Cinema Novo films therefore become “allegories of underdevelopment.”

Over the course of its own development, Cinema Novo exhibited various forms of allegories according to the successive phases of the movement. In the initial phase (1960-1964), which cast light upon social problems such as hunger, violence, alienation, exploitation, and racism, a “political optimism” produced allegories of hope that represent the promise of revolution, which can be seen in films such as the aforementioned *Deus e o diabo*, *Vidas secas*, and *Os fuzis*, as well as in *Ganga Zumba* (1963), whose depiction of the uprisings that led to the foundation of the *quilombos*, communities of run-away slaves, allegorizes analogous situations of oppression and/or unrest in contemporary Brazil.¹¹⁵ In the second phase (1964-1968), which focused on the defeat of populism and “the causes of a disaster of such magnitude,” a sense of disillusion produced allegories of disenchantment that represent the anguish of failure, which can be seen in films such as *O Desafio* and *Terra em transe*, in addition to Gustavo Dahl’s *O Bravo Guerreiro* (“The Brave Warrior” – 1968) and Nelson Pereira dos Santos’ *Fome de Amor* (“Hunger for Love” – 1968), all of which allegorize the crisis in conscience of the so-called revolutionary, albeit bourgeois, artist-intellectual.¹¹⁶ As Dahl himself observes:

In *O Desafio*, in *Land in Anguish*, and in *The Brave Warrior*, there wanders the same personage – a petit-bourgeois intellectual, tangled up in doubts, a wretch in crisis. He may be a journalist, a poet, a legislator, in any case he’s always perplexed, hesitating, a weak person who would like to tragically transcend his condition.¹¹⁷



Poster for *Ganga Zumba*

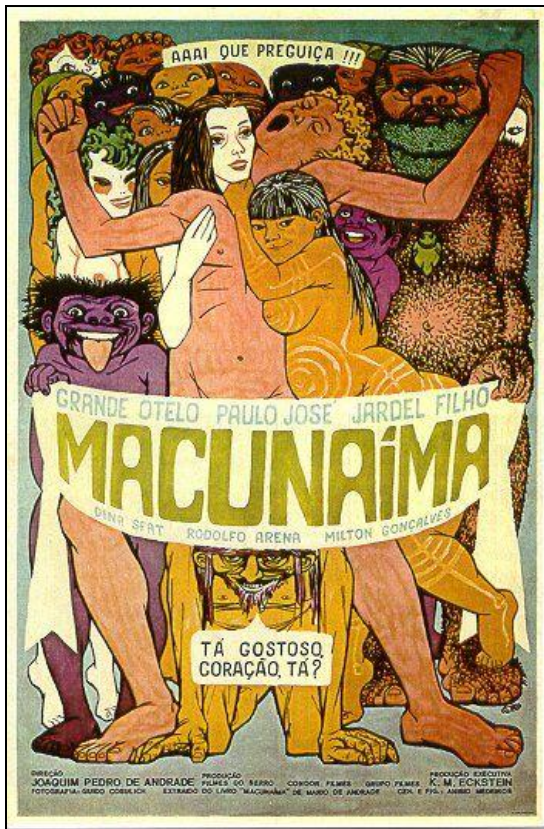


Poster for *O bravo guerreiro*

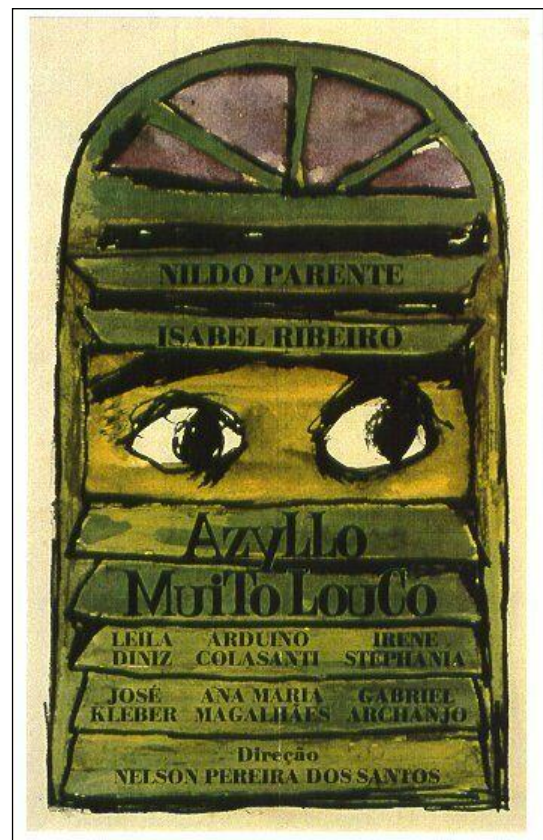


Poster for *Fome de amor*

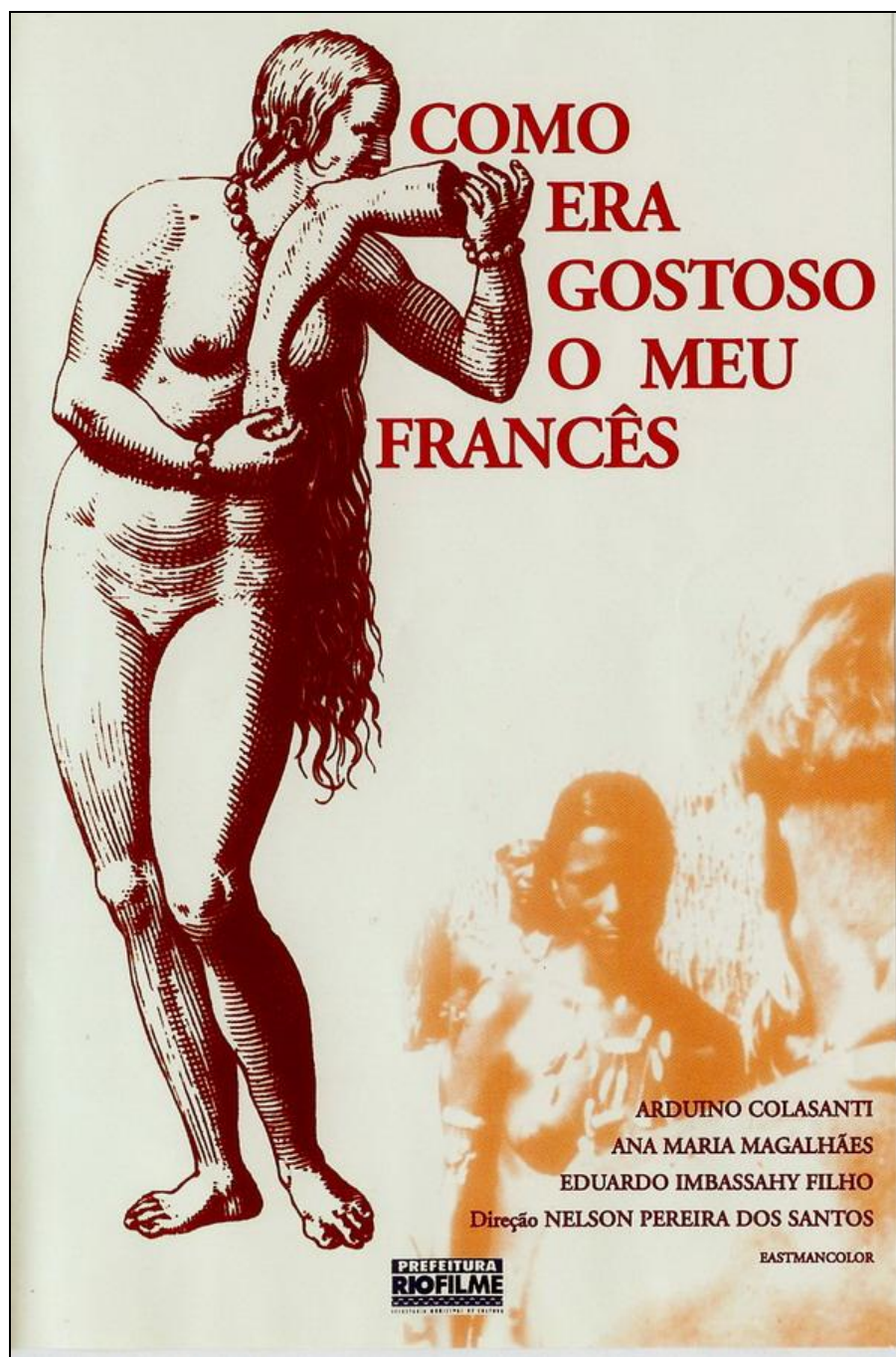
In its final, “cannibal-tropicalist” phase (1968-1972), which reinterprets cultural tradition(s) in transformation via processes of modernization, a more explicit form of allegory produced “a coded language of revolt” against an autocratic military regime and the capitalist, imperialist, and/or neocolonialist (super)structures that supported it.¹¹⁸ Joaquim Pedro de Andrade’s immensely popular *Macunaíma* (1969), based on the modernist novel by Mário de Andrade, recasts the nationalist (anti)hero in his passage from the primitive jungle to the modern metropolis via a parodic critique of contemporary Brazilian society, relating consumerism to a form of (self)cannibalism. Rocha’s *O dragão da maldade*, a sequel to *Deus e o diabo* that, in effect, realizes the prophesied revolution, not only reenacts the popular myth of Saint George, the dragon-slayer, but also recontextualizes a multiplicity of national class struggles in an era of multinational corporations. Santos’ *Azyllo muito louco* (*The Alienist* – 1970), based on the renowned writer Machado de Assis’ *O Alienista*, alludes to the coercive power of the dictatorship as a mad psychiatrist-priest terrorizes and commits almost the entire population, whose ideas and/or beliefs are deemed irrational, to an insane asylum for institutional observation and ideological rehabilitation. Also by Santos, *Como era gostoso o meu francês* (*How Tasty was my Little Frenchman* – 1971), based on the (in)famous tales of the German adventurer Hans Staden, returns to *antropofagia* as a revolutionary practice of transculturation that deconstructs nationalist myths of origin and decolonizes Latin American culture. As a figurative and/or coded form of discourse that both conceals and reveals its meaning and/or message, the allegorical mode of representation exhibited in these and other films thus restages the national and/or cultural reality of Brazil and the sociopolitical situation of Latin America.



Poster for *Macunaíma*



Poster for *Azylo muito louco*



Poster for *Como era gostoso o meu francês*

Inasmuch as the text *signals* the context, allegory in Cinema Novo constitutes a form of language and/or mode of writing in which the story represents history. As historical events transpire, however, conceptions of allegory correspond to contemporary perceptions of the moment. In the evolution of the Cinema Novo movement, Xavier identifies traditional concepts of allegory related to Eric Auerbach's biblical figuralism and Walter Benjamin's baroque emblematics, and modern notions of allegory related to Jacques Derrida's deconstruction and Fredric Jameson's neo-marxism.¹¹⁹ As a discourse, allegory is essentially founded on *difference* and/or *otherness*, inasmuch as it says something different, or other, than what is actually said. In relation to Baroque styles of representation in Europe, which (co)incidentally marked the (non) origin of art and literature in Latin America, Benjamin defines allegory as a "form of expression" in which "any person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else."¹²⁰ A multiplicity of complex interrelations is thereby established by "the disjunctive, atomizing principle of the allegorical approach," in which Benjamin observes that "language is broken up so as to acquire a changed and intensified meaning in its fragments."¹²¹ Allegory as such is moreover a metaphorical form of writing, akin to the hieroglyph and/or ideogram, that fuses image and sign via an "emblematic schema," in which what is signified "springs obviously into view."¹²² According to Benjamin, via allegory "the object becomes something different [...] a key to the realm of hidden knowledge."¹²³ The "emblematic" significance of the object is ultimately "what determines the character of allegory as a form of writing. It is a schema; and as a schema it is an object of knowledge, but it is not securely possessed until it becomes a fixed schema: at one and the same time a fixed image and a fixing sign."¹²⁴ As schema, allegory is therefore a form of writing in which the image, as figure or "emblem," becomes a *sign* within a

meaningful *design*. As a fragmented mode of representation, the allegory is furthermore diagrammatic, as “the image is only a signature, the monogram of essence, not the essence itself in a mask.”¹²⁵

As a “form of expression” and/or mode of representation essentially founded on *difference* and/or *otherness*, the allegorical is also “dialectical” according to Benjamin, both in form and in content. As a form, allegory is “both convention *and* expression; and both are inherently contradictory.”¹²⁶ In content, it is via the “combination of nature and history that the allegorical mode of expression is born.”¹²⁷ The dialectical character of allegory would thus appear to *underwrite* the discourse of a dialectical cinema, such as Cinema Novo, in which the images represent ideas with a *different* meaning and an *other* significance. For Xavier, allegory in Cinema Novo is furthermore marked by “a dialectics between fragmentation (which questions meaning) and totalization (which affirms it).”¹²⁸ Such a dialectics poses “a play of oppositions involving specific ideas of the nation as a whole, or, rather, deconstructive attacks on the totalizations implied in the various forms of nationalism.”¹²⁹ Although the national prefigures a totality, the fragmentary discourse deconstructs the whole into disjunctive, albeit interrelated, parts that reconfigure the national context as a multiplicity. In terms of cinematographic language and/or writing, such a dialectics of fragmentation and totalization is apparent in both the traditional and the modern styles of allegory that are apparent in Cinema Novo. As Xavier observes:

On the level of visual composition, we can have a modern allegorical style associated with discontinuity, collages, fragmentation, or other effects created by “visible” editing. Nevertheless, allegory can also be built from traditional schemes such as the emblem, the caricature, or the collection of objects creating a “cosmic order” within which the characters find their places.¹³⁰

Allegory therefore operates via the language and/or writing of the cinema itself, both in montage and in the *mise-en-scène*. Despite the variations, a typical feature of Cinema Novo allegories, according to Xavier, is “the interaction between the *mise-en-scène* and explicit comment,” a form of “self-conscious schematization” that shows the filmmaker’s *hand*, so to speak, in order to expose *ideas* in the process.¹³¹ Once more, allegory is perceived as a schema (or design) in which images figure as emblems (or signs), monograms that are interrelated diagrammatically. Xavier thus observes, in Cinema Novo, “the tendency of allegory, in all its modalities, to offer clear configurations for the essential pieces of its game:”

There is a graphic isolation of the elements put into relation, and this does not always mean that there is a “clear message” because the proper disjunction of the terms, as in the collage, may be a strategem to enhance ambiguity and enigma. On the level of the *mise-en-scène*, we can see characters whose masks are carefully built in order to function almost as a diagram, a constellation of typical traits that insert them into a clear oppositional system.¹³²

Via montage editing and the composition of the *mise-en-scène*, the cinematographic configuration of the story and its figures thereby represents a *transfiguration* of history itself, its conflicts and oppositions. In Cinema Novo, the dialectics of allegory, as manifest in a dialectical cinema, ultimately corresponds to a historical dialectics that in turn prefigures a cultural revolution.

The allegorical form of expression and/or mode of representation differentiates Cinema Novo as a dialectical cinema. With its “coded language of revolt,” allegory dislocates the movement at the vanguard of a *revolution* in the evolution of modern cinema. If (national) allegory is characteristic of the “radical difference” of Third World texts, its effective presence in Latin American cinema marks, in a sense, a *return* to modes of

representation that had fallen out of style but were witnessing a revision, or revival, of sorts in contemporary aesthetics and/or poetics. Although allegory has been “a form long discredited in the west,” according to Jameson, it is nonetheless “a structure which also seems to be experiencing a remarkable reawakening of interest” in post-modern criticism and theory:

If allegory has once again become somehow congenial for us today, as over against the massive and monumental unifications of an older modernist symbolism or even realism itself, it is because the allegorical spirit is profoundly discontinuous, a matter of breaks and heterogeneities, of the multiple polysemia of the dream rather than the homogenous representation of the symbol.¹³³

In a sense, the allegorical expressions of a dialectical cinema arguably surpass, by an *other*, *different* means, both the symbolic-expressionism of Eisenstein and the dramatic-realism of Bazin. Inasmuch as (national) allegory in Cinema Novo is manifest via a disjunctive, fragmentary, and complex form of language and/or mode of writing, the films demonstrate what Jameson considers to be “the capacity of allegory to generate a range of distinct meanings or messages, simultaneously.”¹³⁴ The multiplicity of interrelations that defines allegory as a schematic code of *difference* and/or *otherness* is produced, in Cinema Novo, by a multiplicity of cinematographic techniques that would ultimately classify it as an *inter-codical* cinema.

As a form of language and/or mode of writing, the cinema can also be seen and/or read as a configuration of signs and/or designs. In *Language and Cinema* (1974), Metz thereby develops his semiological theory of the cinema in terms of “codes.” For Metz, there are specific “inter-codical paradigms” that are “activated” in films belonging to a “flamboyant” or “exuberant” baroque tradition, such as Rocha’s *Terra em transe*, which are

distinguished by “a particular (always a little playful) multiplication of ‘cinematic processes.’”¹³⁵ According to Metz:

What is characteristic of films of this sort is that they are not content to appeal to several distinct and complementary cinematic *codes* – a normal procedure and one common to every film, as just stated – but to several *sub-codes* of the same code, the normal rule for which is to have some sub-codes exclude the others and maintain mutual relationships of substitution [...] it is not (for example) a code of montage and a code of lighting which are juxtaposed in the film, but two sub-codes of montage which come from different aesthetics and different ‘epochs,’ and between which films normally choose. Thus the direct *bringing into contact* of the very terms of the choice indicates a refusal to choose, and it is this refusal – or this explicit affirmation of several contrary codes – which gives to such films their particular appearance; they seem to skip across the history of styles and are expressed according to an *anthological* procedure.¹³⁶

Cinema Novo films display such a multiplicity of “contrary codes,” in which antagonistic cinematographic tendencies and/or styles interact in a dialectical cinema. This “*bringing into contact*” of opposing trends of formalism and realism, of montage and mise-en-scène, traverses the history of (world) cinema that begins with Lumière and Méliès and culminates with Godard. In dialogue with the modern European cinema, a Latin American *cinema novo* comprises an anthology of movements and/or styles that include *neorealismo*, *nouvelle vague*, and *cinéma vérité*. A bourgeois *politique des auteurs* and *cinéma d’art* is complemented by a socialist dialectical-materialism and a nationalist allegory that combines aesthetics and/or poetics with ethics and/or politics. Modernism and the avant-garde correspond with primitivism and folklore, as the periphery responds to the metropolis. Finally, the modern itself is juxtaposed with alternative (Third World) modernities, where the local and the universal intersect. Cinema Novo thus emerges *in between* the multiple and contradictory “inter-codical” relations it diagrams in a new form of language and/or mode of writing.

Emblematic of the Cinema Novo movement, *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* is representative of the principal characteristics of the new Latin American cinema. Its dialogue with the new European cinema(s) is evident in the low-budget, independent film production strategy and the signature styles of its *auteurs*. The use of on-location shooting, handheld cameras, non-professional actors, local dialects, and improvisation serves to document a miserable, desperate social reality via an aesthetics of poverty and/or “hunger.” Although the use of deep focus photography and long takes transcribes the “language of reality” onto the mise-en-scène, montage editing ascribes further meaning and/or significance to the cinematographic images. The combination of formalism and realism results in a “true,” “direct” cinema produced by documentary techniques and a dialectical method: “a camera in hand and an idea in the head.” *Deus e o diabo* as such represents a dialectical cinema in both form and content, style and substance: a teleological-materialist formulation of (national) allegory in a metaphorical language that re-writes history as a story of truth and the imagination. As Rocha reveals:

A origem de Deus e o diabo é uma língua metafórica, a literatura de cordel. No Nordeste, os cegos, nos circos, nas feiras, nos teatros populares, começam uma história cantando: eu vou lhes contar uma história que é de verdade e de imaginação, ou então que é imaginação verdadeira.¹³⁷

Between God and the Devil, the desert and the sea, the material and the spiritual, the historical and the legendary, the modern and the folkloric, the erudite and the popular, the written and the oral, the image and the sign, the cinema and literature, *Deus e o diabo* synthesizes the multiple interactions of various oppositions. Such a multiplicity of contradictory interrelations is complemented by the multiplicity of cinematographic techniques within an “inter-codical” paradigm characterized by the juxtaposition of contrary codes. As Rocha himself admits: “Eu gosto, às vezes, de trabalhar com várias técnicas, como

um meio de evitar a esquematização.”¹³⁸ Expressing its original *identity-as-alterity* in a language and/or writing of *difference* and/or *otherness*, *Deus e o diabo*, via the critical appropriation and/or original transformation of universal cinematographic codes, thus constitutes an anthology of world cinema that ultimately dialogues with the historical imperialism of John Ford, the epic-didactic formalism of Eisenstein, the (melo)dramatic neo-realism of Visconti, and the anarchist neo-surrealism of Buñuel. As Rocha finally observes:

You could say that *Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol* [...] was a film provoked by the impossibility of doing a truly great Western, as, for instance, John Ford could. Equally, there was a trail of inspiration from Eisenstein, from *The General Line*, from *The Battleship Potemkin*, and further ideas from Visconti and Rossellini, from Kurosawa and from Buñuel. *Deus e o Diabo* arose from this tussle between Ford and Eisenstein, from the anarchy of Buñuel, and from the savage strength of the lunacy of surrealism.¹³⁹

In its transcultural dialogue with “new” cinemas such as *neorealismo* and the *nouvelle vague*, as a response to developments in modernist cinema, a *cinema novo* anthologizes a universal cinematic tradition in order to found a new cinema in the New World. With *a camera in hand and an idea in the head*, the result was a truly dialectical cinema in both form and content. From an ex-centric point of view, the new Latin America cinema would nonetheless identify itself via its radical *difference* and/or *otherness* from the new and/or modern cinema(s) of Europe. As Glauber Rocha resolutely declares:

Nós não queremos Eisenstein, Rossellini, Bergman, Fellini, John Ford, ninguém. Nosso cinema é novo não por causa da nossa idade [...] Nosso cinema é novo porque o homem brasileiro é novo e a problemática do Brasil é nova e nossa luz é nova e por isto nossos filmes nascem diferentes dos cinemas da Europa.¹⁴⁰

By rejecting the influence of consecrated foreign *auteurs*, Rocha explicitly establishes antithetical relations between European (and American) and Latin American cinemas. By affirming the newness of *cinema novo*, he also implicitly acknowledges the confluence of factors that defines his native culture as a unique synthesis of diverse local and universal elements. As such, dialogical relations are underwritten by dialectical relations that reproduce an identity founded upon difference. The barbarian speaks an *other* language, expressing a *different* reality, which throughout Modernity has been marked by both imperialism and capitalism. As an act of revolt against neo-colonialism, the primary objective of Cinema Novo was to seize control of the (local) cinematic industry, its means of production and distribution, and substitute a cinema of spectacle and entertainment with one of reflection and critique. The goal was thus “to overthrow American, European, and Brazilian consumer cinema and replace it with a dialectical cinema,” according to Rocha.¹⁴¹

In addition to the commercial cinema of Hollywood, Rocha also takes aim at both the socialist cinema of Moscow and the bourgeois *cinéma d'art* produced by the *auteurs* of Neo-Realism and the New Wave. As Rocha declares, “Fox, Paramount, and Metro are our enemies. But Eisenstein, Rossellini, and Godard are also our enemies. They crush us.”¹⁴² The fundamental problem, once more, was how to create a new, original cinematographic language and/or writing *over* and *against* the “crushing” influence of European (and American) cinema. The solution was to “reformulate,” not imitate, a discourse without its ideology:

Acabar com essa mania de querer ser europeus, intelectuais, falar francês e inglês. O latino-americano é subdesenvolvido, é índio, mestiço, é selvagem, está doente, daí ter de partir do zero. E também não ser tão radical com a Europa ou com os EUA, como para não aproveitar o que nos podem oferecer no que diz respeito à técnica e a métodos, não quanto a pensamento. Para aprender estes métodos e *reformulá-los*, não pretende copiá-los. Há que lutar contra a colonização, ainda que não nos livremos dela no momento em que deixarmos de ser subdesenvolvidos. Há que ser menos teóricos e mais práticos.¹⁴³

In Latin America, a revolutionary cinema must ultimately struggle for independence via cultural decolonization, and therefore it must adopt and/or adapt effective strategies of resistance. Just as the native Caliban, an enslaved cannibal, learns to use an imposed foreign language to curse his tyrannical master, an alternative *cinema novo* incorporates the language of the new cinema(s) in order to confront its counterparts and/or predecessors. Instead of subserviently imitating the “culture of domination,” for Rocha, “the filmmaker must be dialectical and cannibalistic.”¹⁴⁴ Via the aforementioned “anthological procedure” that characterizes an inter-codical cinema, Cinema Novo thus turns the modern cult of *cinephilia* into an otherwise primitive ritual of *antropofagia*, as an act of reverence, in effect, becomes an act of vengeance. Such a form of (cultural) cannibalism represents the critical

appropriation of universal cinematographic codes and the original transformation of a world cinematic tradition. An “aesthetics of hunger” would therefore devour what Rocha terms “the commercial-popular esthetics of Hollywood, the populist-demagogic esthetics of Moscow, and the bourgeois-artistic esthetics of Europe,” in order to re-produce “a new, popular, revolutionary esthetic” for Latin America and/or the Third World.¹⁴⁵

The new, revolutionary aesthetics illustrated by Cinema Novo was first articulated as such in Rocha’s widely disseminated manifesto “Estética da fome” (“An Esthetics of Hunger” – 1965), which was subsequently translated into French and published as “L’esthétique de la violence.” Directed at an international audience, the text in part constituted a retrospective of the movement’s early films, such as *Deus e o diabo*, *Vidas secas*, and *Ganga Zumba*, focusing on the apparent “primitivism” of an underdeveloped Latin America in relation to a “civilized” Europe. The Latin American reality is characterized as one of “misery” due to the economic and political consequences of (neo)colonialism, which in turn produces significant social and cultural (after)effects.

According to Rocha:

This economic and political conditioning has led us to philosophical weakness and impotence that engenders sterility when conscious and hysteria when unconscious. It is for this reason that the hunger of Latin America is not simply an alarming symptom: it is the essence of our society. There resides the tragic originality of Cinema Novo in relation to world cinema. Our originality is our hunger and our greatest misery is that this hunger is felt but not intellectually understood.¹⁴⁶

The “originality” of Cinema Novo is therefore founded upon the material, historical reality of Latin America, which is deemed incomprehensible to the European except as an absurd form of “tropical surrealism.”¹⁴⁷ In order to communicate an otherwise “real” misery, Cinema Novo expresses itself via “sad, ugly films,” a series of “screaming, desperate films where

reason does not always prevail.”¹⁴⁸ From Rocha’s point of view, hunger is not only thematically represented by “characters eating dirt and roots, characters stealing to eat, characters killing to eat, characters fleeing to eat,” but also structurally presented in a style that reflects the poverty it describes and/or transcribes in images.¹⁴⁹ As such, form effectively mirrors content in an aesthetics of “hunger” created by a low-budget production strategy that was preconditioned by the lack of economic resources. In dialectical fashion, a negative condition nonetheless acquires a positive dimension, as Rocha affirms that “only a culture of hunger, weakening its own structures, can surpass itself qualitatively.”¹⁵⁰ If, in a sense, “the most noble cultural manifestation of hunger is violence,” then an aesthetics of “hunger” must in turn incorporate “violence” in order to realize the revolution that will decolonize Latin American art and culture. Cinema Novo films thereby demonstrate that “the normal behavior of the starving is violence; and the violence of the starving is not primitive.”¹⁵¹ Consequently, an aesthetics of “violence” becomes “revolutionary” inasmuch as it confronts the forces of neo-colonialism:

From Cinema Novo it should be learned that an esthetic of violence, before being primitive, is revolutionary. It is the initial moment when the colonizer becomes aware of the colonized. Only when confronted with violence does the colonizer understand, through horror, the strength of the culture he exploits.¹⁵²

Rocha’s radical call for violence echoes the rhetoric of the revolutionary writer and thinker Frantz Fanon, who in *Les Damnés de la Terre* (*The Wretched of the Earth* – 1961) asserts that “decolonization is always a violent event.”¹⁵³ Both Rocha and Fanon proposed an *other, different* humanism that critiques a Eurocentric modernity whose darker side is coloniality. While Fanon performs, in Sartre’s words, “the striptease of our humanism,”

which is “nothing but a dishonest ideology, an exquisite justification for plundering,” Rocha likewise unmasks the “colonizing” humanism and its inherent violence.¹⁵⁴

From a moral position this violence is not filled with hatred just as it is not linked to the old colonizing humanism. The love that this violence encompasses is as brutal as the violence itself because it is not a love of complacency or contemplation but rather of action and transformation.¹⁵⁵

Both in *spite* of, and in *light* of, the violence, Fanon and Rocha invoke the principles of humanism in order to reformulate a new humanism in the context of decolonization, a movement to liberate the Third World in the name of a new humanity. In contrast to the violence advocated by socio-political movements in Africa, however, the violence proposed by an aesthetic and/or cultural movement in Latin America was arguably *metaphorical*, manifesting itself primarily via a revolutionary cinematographic discourse, itself a critical appropriation and original transformation of an imposed “heritage” of world cinema. In its historical struggle for independence from the “domination” of industrial cinema and the “crushing” influence of *cinéma d’art*, a dialectical and cannibalistic *cinema novo* allegorically seeks freedom from “the debilitating delirium of hunger” via an aesthetics of hunger and/or violence that would ultimately “make the public aware of its own misery,” creating the pretext for a (cultural) revolution.¹⁵⁶

This section relates Cinema Novo’s violent “ezthetiks of hunger” as a cannibalization of both classical and modernist cinema. It presents the assimilation of Hollywood models, Soviet models, and European “art film” models. It particularly focuses on the adoption and adaptation of the western genre in Brazilian *nordesterns* and on Rocha’s references to Orson Welles’ masterpiece *Citizen Kane*, on the incorporation of montage techniques developed by Eisenstein and on Rocha’s allusions to *Battleship Potemkin* and *October*, and on the evolution of a *cinéma d’art*, both in avant-garde movements such as Futurism and

Surrealism, and in the productions by early *auteurs* such as Luis Buñuel. Finally, it considers the significance of *tropicalismo* as a Latin American surrealism based on an aesthetics of the dream that might, as such, realize the ultimate goal of social revolution and cultural decolonization.

Hollywood – Moscow -- Europe

As a cultural manifesto for a revolutionary cinema, “An Esthetic of Hunger” primarily attacks imperialism and/or neo-colonialism along with its capitalist (super)structures. Cinema Novo thus differentiates itself from the illusory spectacle(s) of commercial cinema as exemplified by Hollywood, which has always dominated the cinema industry both in Europe and in Latin America. Armed with a limited number of *cameras in hand*, but with an abundant amount of *ideas in the head*, filmmakers such as Rocha targeted the industrial machinery of representation, and especially the capitalist ideology it propagates, with an alternative cinematographic discourse based on “truth.” According to Rocha’s definition:

Wherever one finds filmmakers prepared to film the truth [...] there is the living spirit of Cinema Novo; wherever filmmakers [...] place their cameras and their profession in the service of the great causes of our time there is the spirit of Cinema Novo. This is the definition of the movement and through this definition Cinema Novo sets itself apart from the commercial industry because the commitment of Industrial Cinema is to untruth and exploitation.¹⁵⁷

By placing both the filmmaker and the act of filmmaking itself “in the service of the great causes of our time,” Rocha’s call to arms was an attempt to promote the new Latin American cinema as a strategy for social revolution and cultural decolonization. To fight against a

more powerful enemy, subversive tactics would include a critical appropriation of its models and an original transformation of its propaganda. Just as a commercial cinema consumes the market it exploits, a *cinema novo* would thereby consume Hollywood via a cannibalization of its genres and/or styles.

In the evolution of Hollywood cinema, a genre that has significantly marked both the image(s) and the imagination of an American identity is the western, in which Rocha perceives a synthesis of aesthetics and ethics in its legendary (hi)stories of “good” *versus* “evil:”

O *western*, primeira e única cristalização estético-social do cinema americano [...] relatório dramatizado da grande marcha da colonização desenvolvida rumo ao interior do grande país e posteriormente da fixação social desses desbravadores, de sua adaptação humana, da sua luta contra um feudalismo que se forma rapidamente [...] afirmou-se, primeiramente, pelo significado poético, intensidade mítica em concentração no legendário herói do bem na luta contra o mal, ética espontânea de homens rústicos.¹⁵⁸

For Rocha, the western is therefore the most “authentic” genre of American cinema, inasmuch as it represents “o sangue básico do americano, sua cultura popular, sua formação étnica, religiosa no que ele possui de indevassável.”¹⁵⁹ A “genius” who is said to unite the poetic and the social, the director John Ford is considered to be the filmmaker most responsible for the development of the western, which is ultimately both epic and historical.¹⁶⁰ Such a combination of aesthetics and ethics, myth and history, is likewise evident in Rocha’s own filmography, which effectively remakes the western into a *nordestern* (“northeastern”). In the context of Cinema Novo, the reformulation of a classical genre and/or style is not a form of imitation *per se*, but rather the transformation of a tradition that informs the formation of a new, original cinematographic language and/or writing via a process of transculturation. As Rocha observes:

The past and present cinematic technique of the developed world interests me to the extent that I can use it the way American cinema was used by certain European filmmakers. Certain cinematic techniques have transcended both individual auteurs and the films in which they operate to form a sort of vocabulary of cinema: if I film a *cangaceiro* in the *sertão*, it belongs to a montage tradition that is linked to the western, more than to individual auteurs like Ford or Hawks. On the other hand, imitation need not be perceived as a passive act, a need to take refuge in the established language of the form [...] But it is only by encounters with reality that and by the exercise of one's profession that one can go beyond imitation.¹⁶¹

As Rocha suggests, the techniques of Hollywood cinema establish a universal tradition that can be “used” in local circumstances. As such, the *sertão* would correspond to the Wild West, and the *cangaceiro* would resemble the outlaw. Rocha elsewhere proposes that a *nordestern* might follow the “lessons” of Ford or Howard Hawks but invert form and content via a process of “aesthetic anthropophagy.”¹⁶² Such a “structural” inversion, as realized by Godard in *Vent d'est*, would furthermore be useful in an *other* context due to cultural relevance of the “saga” and/or “epic” in Brazil and/or Latin America:

A structural inversion in the Western genre could be very interesting and useful for us. The Western is important, not just for me. We are a people historically linked to the saga, to the epic. We [...] have a grand philosophical tradition, which is bad. But an imported philosophy that doesn't relate to our history would be worse. For this reason, anthropophagy is even more important.¹⁶³

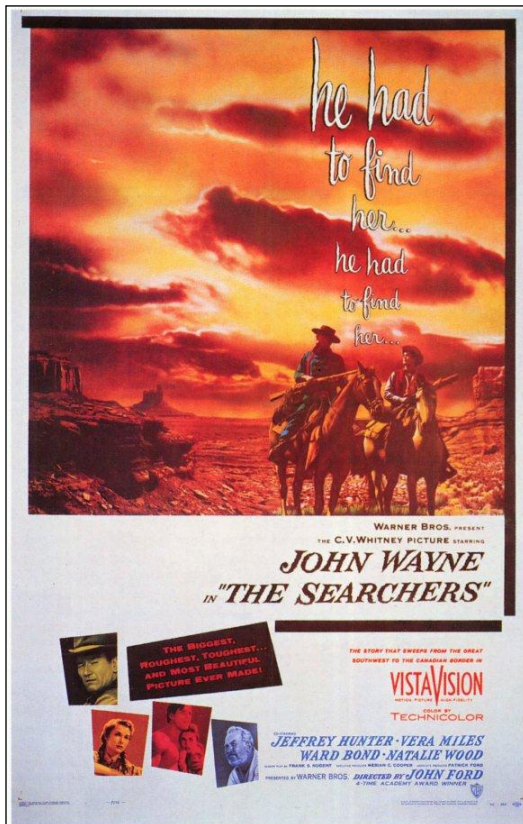
Referring to both the historical and philosophical tradition(s) of Brazil, Rocha once more invokes (cultural) cannibalism as a *modus operandi* for Cinema Novo. In the absence of a local cinematographic language and/or writing that expresses the Latin American “saga,” the *nordestern* would thereby incorporate the universal “codified language” of Hollywood and the (American) western in order to represent the (Brazilian) northeast and its typical figures.¹⁶⁴ Rocha even admits a preference for the western genre because of its “epic” dimensions, which become significant in his own filmography: “O gênero que eu mais gosto

é o *western*, pois mesmo que não chegue a ser uma epopéia, é o que está mais próxima a ela. Existem elementos de *westerns* em todos meus filmes.”¹⁶⁵ The appropriation and/or expropriation of the western genre is thus apparent in the style(s) of both *Deus e o diabo* and *O dragão da maldade*, whose ambiguous character Antônio das Mortes, for instance, embodies the contradictions of Ethan Edwards, from Ford’s *The Searchers* (1956).¹⁶⁶ In addition to drawing from a number of classic westerns, including a reference to Sam Peckinpah’s *Ride the High Country* (1962), *O dragão da maldade* also offers a practical lesson on how to adopt and adapt a (universal) cinematographic tradition. According to Rocha:

Com relação a *O dragão da maldade*, eu quis fazer um *western* bastante objetivo [...] Escolhi quatro ou cinco *westerns* que vi e revi para chegar a algumas conclusões. Eu vi *Red River*, *El Dorado* e *Rio Bravo*. E disse a mim mesmo: é preciso retomar este espírito, estes gestos feitos em completa intimidade, como nos filmes de Hawks. Estes são realmente um épico antiexpressionista. Mas, no momento de filmar, tudo mudava, eu não poderia ficar apenas no nível do meu aprendizado anterior. E esta é uma boa solução: quando se descobre certas referências, é necessário que elas sejam dissolvidas no movimento.¹⁶⁷

Informed by the western, Rocha’s *nordestern* thereby transforms a Hollywood genre via a process of anthropophagic transculturation outlined by an aesthetics of “hunger.”

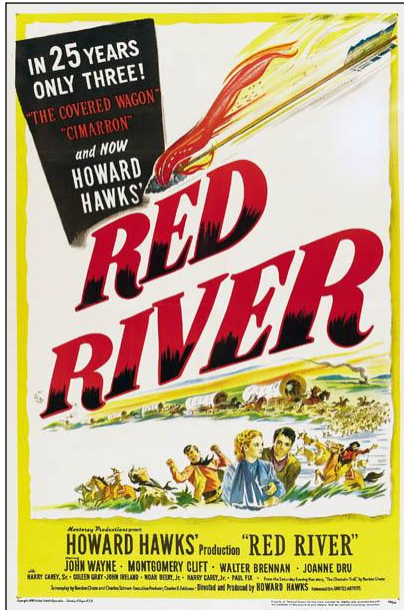
If the theoretical foundations for a revolutionary Cinema Novo were based on films such as *Deus e o diabo*, a “practical manifesto” of the aesthetics of “hunger” and/or “violence” was subsequently formulated by Rocha in *Terra em transe*, which also cannibalizes Hollywood cinema.¹⁶⁸ In *Terra em transe*, the forces of imperialist and/or neo-colonialist exploitation are thematically represented in the emblematic figure of the multinational corporation Explint (Compañia de Explotaciones Internacionales), which seeks to dominate both the industries and media of Eldorado, an allegorical trope for Brazil and/or



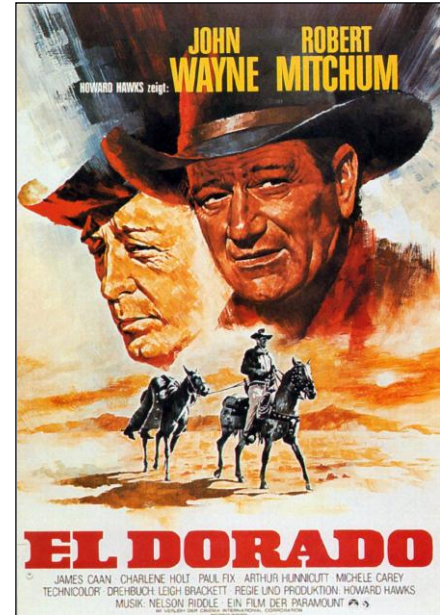
Poster for *The Searcher's*



Poster for *Ride the High Country*



Poster for *Red River*



Poster for *El Dorado*

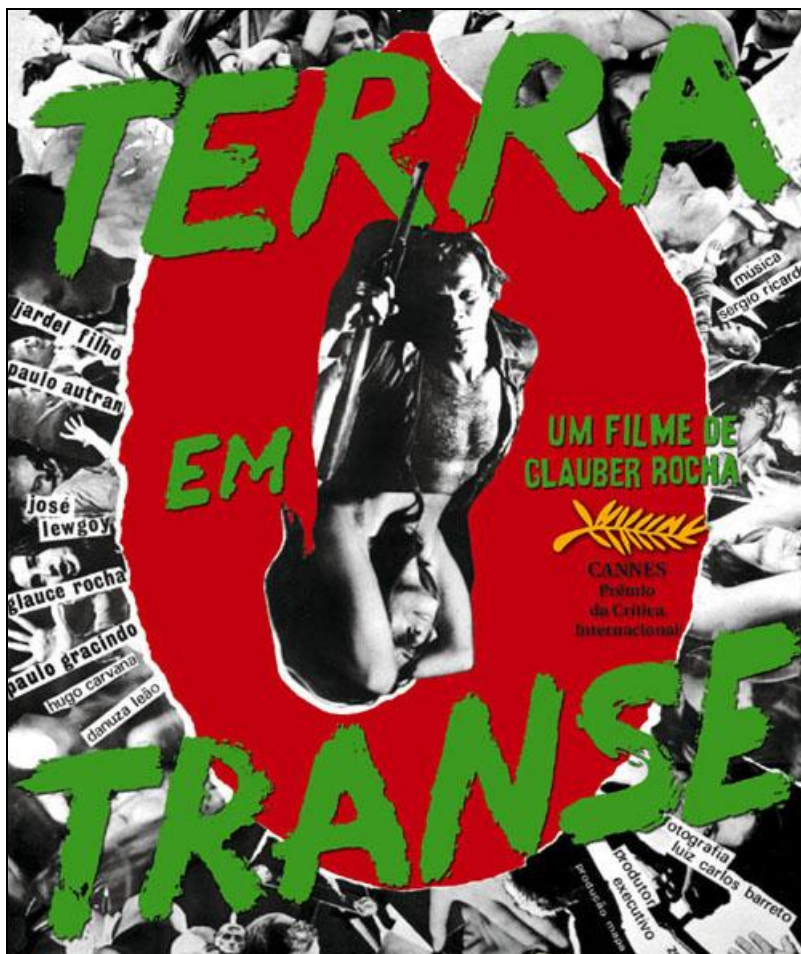


Poster for *Rio Bravo*

Latin America. In terms of form and content, there are explicit references to *Citizen Kane* (1941), which itself constitutes a critique of capitalism through its representation of the ambiguous figure of an American newspaper tycoon. Rocha himself has admitted “clear influences” of the director Orson Welles in *Terra em transe*, which is referred to as his “anti-*Citizen Kane*.”¹⁶⁹ For example, the film’s narrative is structured as a series of fragmented flashbacks, featuring a poet-journalist as protagonist while considering the role of journalism and the media in general. The documentary “Biography of an Adventurer,” a film within the film, recalls the famous montage sequence of the “News on the March” scene, itself a parody of the “March of Time” newsreel.¹⁷⁰ As Rocha observes:

Trata-se de uma referência quista e programada. Sem querer nenhum paralelo, porque para mim o filme de Welles é uma obra excepcional, pretendi mesmo realizar uma espécie de paródia a *Cidadão Kane*, pois, aquele filme me parecia apresentar a estrutura idealista de filme político americano, e visto que o Brasil é uma colônia latino-americana, me parecia útil e significativo nos confrontos da situação brasileira. Assumi *Cidadão Kane* como ponto de referência.¹⁷¹

As a parody of a modernist masterpiece of Hollywood cinema, *Terra em transe* has been considered the *Citizen Kane* of the tropics.¹⁷² Both films exemplify an “inter-codical” paradigm that has been described as “feverish” by Metz, displaying a multiplicity of cinematographic techniques that constitute an amalgam of styles which span the history of the cinema.¹⁷³ Like Ford and Hawks, Welles becomes an integral part of an anthology of foreign *auteurs* whose works are cannibalized by a native Brazilian and/or Latin American tradition. Admitting another Hollywood classic as a “point of reference,” however, Rocha nonetheless recognizes the same inevitable contradiction of seeking originality via imitation that characterizes *Deus e o diabo* in its transcultural dialogue with European (and American) cinema, though it is precisely such a dialectics which defines the radical process of (cultural)



Poster for *Terra em transe* – Luiz Carlos Ripper (1967)

cannibalism as a means to affirm identity via *difference* and/or *otherness*. As such, Rocha's *Terra em transe* strives to produce a "complex" and/or "authentic" Latin American cinema that is, in principle, free from neo-colonialist influences. As Rocha observes:

Quando fiz *Terra em transe* [...] quis que fosse uma ruptura a mais radical possível com esse tipo de influências [...] *Terra em transe* foi a tentativa de conseguir em cinema uma expressão complexa, indefinida, mas própria e autêntica a respeito de tudo que poderia ser um cinema da América Latina.¹⁷⁴

In practice, it was the critical appropriation and original transformation of a universal cinematographic tradition, such as the "commercial-popular" aesthetics of Hollywood, which would inform the revolutionary aesthetics of "hunger" and/or "violence" that is formulated in *Terra em transe* and, by extension, in the films of the Cinema Novo movement.

In the context of class struggle, and as a pretext for (cultural) revolution, Cinema Novo not only assimilates the styles and/or genres of a commercial cinema and its ideology of capitalism, but also incorporates the techniques of a populist cinema and its ideology of socialism. Soviet Moscow, the counterpart of American Hollywood in the (cold) war for global hegemony, thus becomes an important reference for a Latin American movement that likewise combines aesthetics and politics. Cinema Novo filmmakers were particularly receptive to the formalist montage of the 1920s, but not the "socialist realism" of the 1930s.¹⁷⁵ The Soviet "montage-theorists," who based their avant-garde cinema on constructivist principles, were not only concerned with "grand ideas," according to Stam, but also with "the practical questions of constructing a socialist film industry which reconciled authorial creativity, political efficacy, and mass popularity."¹⁷⁶ Cinema Novo would thereby appropriate aspects of the revolutionary cinema of Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin, Aleksandr Dovzhenko, and Dziga Vertov in order to form(ulate) a new alternative cinema.¹⁷⁷ The most prominent of these Soviet filmmakers and theorists was Eisenstein, who for Rocha

interprets the “radical transformations” of socialism just as Welles interprets the “tragedy” of imperialism and/or capitalism.¹⁷⁸ In fact, Eisenstein influenced a number of Cinema Novo directors, such as Carlos Diegues, Leon Hirszman, Ruy Guerra, and Rocha himself, who would emulate Eisenstein in both theory and practice. Rocha’s conception of cinematography as a form of hieroglyphic and/or ideographic writing, his predilection for formalism and montage, his dialectical-materialist mode of thinking, his call for an epic-didactic cinema, and his revolutionary rhetoric all evoke the language of Eisenstein’s essays and films. As Xavier observes, Rocha “foi conseqüente na admiração por Eisenstein, a figura maior de referência no seu afã de uma síntese entre sensibilidade e intelecto, emoção e razão. Não por acaso, o cineasta permanece o seu maior inspirador nas incursões teóricas.”¹⁷⁹ Rocha himself ultimately acknowledges such a profound influence by describing his relations to Eisenstein in mythical terms: “No princípio era Eisenstein. Agora é Rocha. E Rocha volta a Eisenstein.”¹⁸⁰ Rocha furthermore declares that, after Eisenstein, “não se faz nada de interessante no cinema. Sim, talvez filmes belos, mas nada de novo, nada que tenha significado. É necessário recomeçar desde Eisenstein: do Eisenstein não somente como diretor, mas também do Eisenstein teórico do cinema.”¹⁸¹ In the evolution of a *cinema novo*, then, such a “return” would, in turn, represent a revolution in the (film)making.

Representative of the Cinema Novo movement, Rocha’s films incorporate a number of techniques from, and include a series of references to, Eisenstein’s filmography. For example, Rocha admits “residues” of Eisenstein in *Barravento* and close-ups that resemble the style of *¡Que viva México!* (1932), a Russian analysis of the Mexican revolution and the simultaneous, contradictory juxtaposition of the modern and the primitive, the European and

the Amerindian, that describe a Latin American culture.¹⁸² The “shadow” of Eisenstein is likewise present, according to Rocha, in the first part of *Deus e o diabo*, with its aforementioned (steno)graphic montage sequences.¹⁸³ For example, the brutal massacre of the *beatos* by the gunslinger Antônio das Mortes exhibits thematic and structural allusions to the “Odessa Steps” sequence in *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and to the “July Days” sequence in *October* (1928), both of which dramatically depict massacres of the proletariat by torrents of gunfire.¹⁸⁴ In the final sequence of *Terra em transe*, which presents the anguish and/or agony of the dying moments of the poet-journalist, a vertical montage structures the interpolation of (subjective) inner thoughts and (objective) outer actions in a scene which evokes the concept of “inner monologue” formulated by Eisenstein in his essay “A Course in Treatment” (1932).¹⁸⁵ In order to express the “subtleties” of an “inner struggle in all its nuances,” the cinema penetrates “inside” the mind of the character, “aurally and visually” records “the feverish *race of thoughts*, intermittently with the outer actuality.”¹⁸⁶ Despite parallels in literature, such as the stream-of-consciousness technique exemplified by Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Eisenstein argues that only “the film-element commands a means for an adequate presentation of the whole course of thought through a disturbed mind.”¹⁸⁷ Although parts of *Battleship Potemkin* and *October* illustrate such a process in action, such an effect would be further enhanced by the development of vertical montage, a technique that is formed by the complex interaction and/or interplay between image and sound. In his essay “Synchronization of Senses,” Eisenstein defines this “new kind of montage” in terms of its “polyphonic” structure, characterized by simultaneity and multiplicity.¹⁸⁸ Eisenstein’s conception of “*polyphonic* montage” is thereby described as a technique by which “shot is linked to shot not merely through one indication – movement, or light values, or stage in the



Poster for *¡Que viva México!*



Poster for *Battleship Potemkin*



Poster for *October*

exposition of the plot, or the like – but through a *simultaneous advance* of a multiple series of lines, each maintaining an independent compositional course and each contributing to the total compositional course of the sequence.”¹⁸⁹ Such a technique would ultimately be explored and developed in *Alexander Nevsky* (1938), a patriotic film that marks Eisenstein’s passage from silent to sound films, his evolution from horizontal to vertical montage.¹⁹⁰ In the course of his own development as a filmmaker, Rocha would observe that the “popular” and “nationalist” *O dragão da maldade* represents the *Alexander Nevsky* of the *sertão*, a “global opera” inspired by the “lessons” of Eisenstein.¹⁹¹ Despite his tutelage, Rocha considers *O dragão da maldade* to also constitute a “rupture” from a universal “cinematographic culture,” an independence attained by revolting against (imperialist) influences and recognizing the (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness* of Latin America and/or the Third World, a reality that is incongruent with the cinema of a Soviet Mosfilm and company.¹⁹² As Rocha concedes: “Eu gosto muito de Eisenstein, mas eu vivo numa realidade que não é uma epopéia no estilo de *Alexandre Nevski*, nem um drama histórico estilo *Ivan, o terrível*.”¹⁹³

Despite the incorporation of social and/or popular themes and the appropriation of formalist techniques such as montage, Cinema Novo ultimately rejects the influence of the post-revolutionary cinema of Moscow and its “populist-demagogic” aesthetics, which assumed the form of propaganda in the Soviet Union after Stalin’s institutionalization of “socialist realism,” an anti-formalist tendency “whose basic principle is the truthful, historically concrete depiction of reality in its revolutionary development.”¹⁹⁴ Such a representation of reality was to be combined with “the task of ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of socialism.”¹⁹⁵ Although vanguard filmmakers such as



Poster for *Alexander Nevsky*



Poster for *Ivan, the Terrible*

Eisenstein did not necessarily adhere to such principles, both his aestheticism and his didacticism would be associated with the colonizing forces of an imperialist superpower. Rocha thus relates Eisenstein's revolutionary mission in *¡Que viva México!* with the missionary zeal of Jesuit priests after the discovery of the New World:

Eisenstein não compreendeu a espontaneidade da arquitetura asteca ou a substantiva monumentalidade dos desertos e vulcões. Sua tentativa de *estetizar* o novo mundo se equipara à tentativa de levar a Palavra de Deus (e os interesses do “Conquistador”) aos índios. A *cultura* era também dos índios. Esta *cultura* Maia, Asteca, Inca foi descoberta e civilizada.¹⁹⁶

If, during the conquest of the Americas, the Word was imposed upon a culture that already possessed its own religion and writing, now the *image* was superimposed upon a culture whose art and cinematography were dominated by neo-colonialist influences. Yet Latin American culture had been formed by *other* traditions which, in addition to Amerindian civilizations such as the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas, included the savages of the Caribbean and Brazil, who devoured the flesh of enemies in order to incorporate their strengths via a barbaric ritual of cannibalism. If Brazilian *modernismo* and its *antropofagia* had advocated the assimilation of European modernism and the avant-garde, Cinema Novo and its aesthetics of “hunger” promoted the cannibalization of Eisenstein and other Soviet “montage-theorists” in order to critically appropriate the cinematographic techniques and subversively transform the ideological discourse of the socialist cinema of Moscow.

In order to liberate art from ideology, aesthetics from politics, and free the craft of filmmaking from the machinery of industrial cinema, Cinema Novo ultimately adhered to the principles of auteurism and produced independent films. The most significant model for the movement, which would exhibit its sense of class consciousness, was the “bourgeois-artistic” aesthetics of Europe that had also incorporated elements of both the “commercial-popular”

aesthetics of Hollywood and the “populist-demagogic” aesthetics of Moscow. While the French New Wave admired the contributions of an imperialist and/or capitalist discourse that was the basis of the works of American directors such as Ford and Welles, Italian Neo-Realism appreciated the contributions of a socialist and/or communist discourse that was the basis of the works of Soviet filmmakers such as Eisenstein. But the origins of the European art cinema actually begin with the “historical” avant-garde movement of Futurism, which arose in both Italy and Russia. In his manifesto “Abstract Cinema – Chromatic Music” (1912), Bruno Corra describes a series of (syn)aesthetic experiments with color in film, thus combining contemporary developments in painting with the cinema. Later, in “The Futurist Cinema” (1916), Corra, F. T. Marinetti, and others express a desire to transfer recent experiments in the theater to the cinema:

At first look the cinema, born only a few years ago, may seem to be Futurist already, lacking a past and free from traditions. Actually, by appearing in the guise of *theatre without words*, it has inherited all the most traditional sweepings of the literary theatre. Consequently, everything we have said and done about the stage applies to the cinema. Our action is legitimate and necessary in so far as the cinema up to now *has been and tends to remain profoundly passéist*, whereas we see in it the possibility of an eminently Futurist art and *the expressive medium most adapted to the complex sensibility of a Futurist artist*.¹⁹⁷

Arguing that the cinema must “never copy the stage” but instead, as a visual art, “fulfill the evolution of painting,” the Futurists ultimately wished to “FREE THE CINEMA AS AN EXPRESSIVE MEDIUM in order to make it the ideal instrument *of a new art*.”¹⁹⁸ According to the manifesto, the “*new art*” of Futurist cinema would therefore include: “CINEMATIC ANALOGIES that use reality directly as one of the two elements of the analogy” (i.e. the image of a “jagged and cavernous mountain” as equivalent to an “anguished state” of mind); “CINEMATIC SIMULTANEITY AND INTERPENETRATION of different times and places” (i.e. the

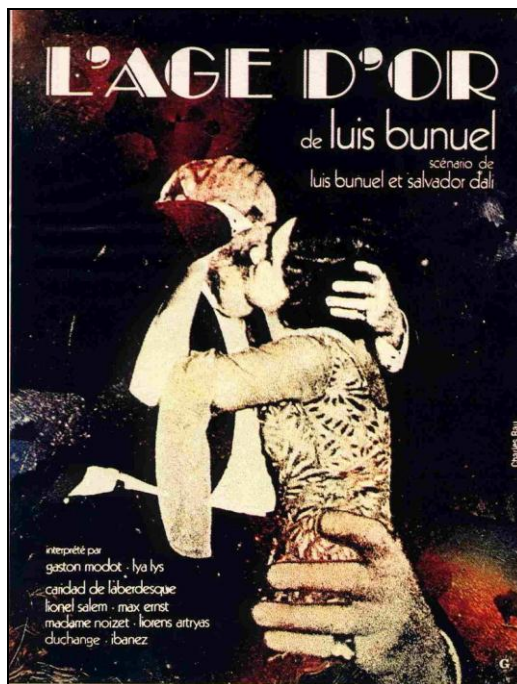
juxtaposition of multiple scenes “at the same time, one next to the other”); “CINEMATIC MUSICAL RESEARCHES (dissonances, harmonies, symphonies of gestures, events, colors, lines, etc.);” “DRAMATIZED STATES OF MIND ON FILM;” and “FILMED DRAMAS OF OBJECTS” (i.e. objects that are “animated, humanized, baffled, dressed up, impassioned, civilized, dancing,” etc.).¹⁹⁹ With such innovations, Futurism would eventually influence the constructivism and/or formalism of the Soviet cinema. For instance, the development of (dialectical) montage as a form of cinematographic language and/or writing was, in effect, anticipated by the use of analogies that relate word and image inasmuch as the “UNIVERSE” becomes a “VOCABULARY” of sorts.²⁰⁰ Furthermore, the declared “*polyexpressiveness*” of Futurist cinema previews, in a sense, the “polyphonic” structure of Eisenstein’s films, which would also be characterized by “analogies,” “simultaneity and interpenetration,” “musical research,” “dramatized states of mind,” and “dramas of objects.” As the first avant-garde movement to experiment with the “*new art*” of cinema, Futurism thus becomes an important reference for the evolution of a *cinéma d’art*.

After Futurism, both Expressionism and Surrealism would significantly explore the cinema as a medium of art. If a Futurist sensibility was moved by the mechanical, and an Expressionist sensitivity was inspired by the spiritual, then a Surrealist receptivity was obsessed with both the automatic and the supernatural. As the last and best known “historical” avant-garde movement in Europe, Surrealism would exert a consequential influence on artists and writers in Latin America for generations. In principle, André Breton initially defined Surrealism as “psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner – the actual functioning of thought.”²⁰¹ In practice, the technique of *l’écriture automatique* would extend

from literature to the visual and/or plastic arts as a means of representing the unconscious. Just as words evoke (dream) images in automatic writing, images become (marvelous) signs in Surrealist photography and cinema, which derived their uncanny effects via montage techniques. According to Stam, from the Surrealist point of view “the cinema had the transcendent capacity to liberate what was conventionally repressed, to mingle the known and the unknown, the mundane and the oneiric, the quotidian and the marvelous.”²⁰² The most prominent Surrealist filmmaker was Luis Buñuel, whose *Un chien andalou* (*An Andalusian Dog* – 1929) was admittedly “the result of a CONSCIOUS *psychic automatism*,” utilizing a technique that is “analogous to that of dreams.”²⁰³ Buñuel furthermore asserts that “NOTHING, in the film, SYMBOLIZES ANYTHING. The only method of investigation of the symbols would be, perhaps, psychoanalysis.”²⁰⁴ As the founder and/or *father* of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud had recently “discovered” the Unconscious as a result of his work on the interpretation of dreams. Dream images, according to Freud, represent unconscious thoughts via a form of “pictographic script,” a sort of picture-puzzle or “rebus,” while the dream itself is ultimately defined as “the (disguised) fulfillment of a (suppressed or repressed) wish.”²⁰⁵ Accordingly, Buñuel’s next film, *L’âge d’or* (*The Golden Age* – 1930), also explores the depths of the unconscious and the productions of desire in a work that Breton himself considered to be an “exaltation of total love.”²⁰⁶ As Breton observes: “Love, in everything it can contain for two beings, which is absolutely limited to them, isolated from the rest of the world, has never shown itself so freely, with so much tranquil audacity.”²⁰⁷ Such a freedom of expression, which realizes the liberation of unconscious forces, would thus inspire the (sur)real “dream” of a Cinema Novo whose films, in a sense, represent the “fulfillment” of an *other* “wish:” a (cultural) revolution in Brazil and Latin America.



Poster for *Un chien andalou*

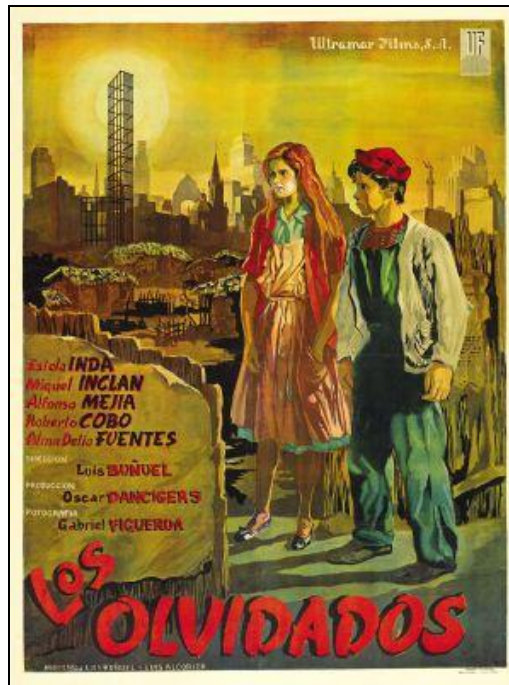


Poster for *L'age d'or*

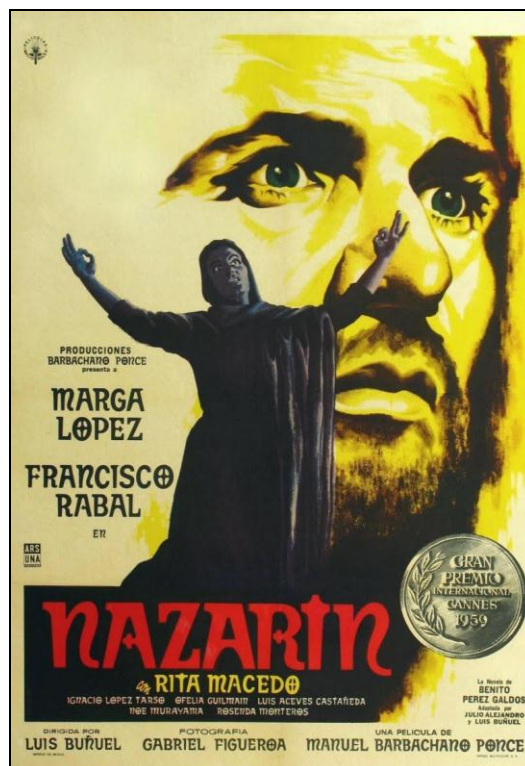
In contrast to Breton's reading of *L'âge d'or* in terms of the sexually repressed, Rocha interprets the surrealism of Buñuel as the language *par excellence* of the socially oppressed.²⁰⁸ The poor, the hungry, and the miserable all represent the invisible, unconscious figures of an intolerable, unreasonable society. Rocha's professed admiration for Buñuel thus derives from the Surrealist's anarchic, subversive tendencies that invoke the irrational and/or the absurd in a (dis)concerted revolt against bourgeois and/or capitalist institutions.²⁰⁹ As Rocha observes: "Desde *L'âge d'or*, o inconsciente espanhol de Bunuel povoou seu cinema de famintos: mendigos em *L'âge d'or*, miseráveis em *Las Hurdes*, mendigos em *Nazarín*, mendigos em *Viridiana*, delinquentes infantis em *Los Olvidados* e subproletariados em *Él*."²¹⁰ An *auteur* who consciously combines aesthetics and ethics, Buñuel thus unconsciously incorporates the (sur)real theme of hunger in his *œuvre*.²¹¹ After filming the "hungry" in Spain, Buñuel turned his focus to Mexico, where he would eventually settle down and acquire citizenship. In contrast to the exoticism of Eisenstein's *¡Que viva México!*, both *Los Olvidados* (1950) and *Nazarín* (1959) are considered by Rocha to be authentic "anthropological essays" about Latin American culture.²¹² In a land where the real is already surreal, in a sense, surrealism is revealed to be an essentially tropical(ist) and/or "Latin" (American) reality. As Rocha declares:

There is a surrealism that is French and another one that is not. Between Breton and Salvador Dali there is an abyss. Surrealism is a Latin thing. Lautréamont was Uruguayan and the first surrealist was Cervantes. Neruda speaks of concrete surrealism. It's the discourse of the relation between hunger and mysticism. Ours is not the surrealism of dreams, but of reality. Buñuel is a surrealist and his Mexican films are the first Tropicalist and anthropophagic films.²¹³

Rocha's reference to a "concrete surrealism" must be read in the context of other Latin American artists and writers who, not by chance, found reality to be surreal enough. Just as



Poster for *Los olvidados*



Poster for *Nazarín*

the *real maravilloso* of Alejo Carpentier dialogues with the marvelous surrealism of Breton via a process of transculturation, the *tropicalismo* of Rocha would therefore appropriate and transform the anarchic neosurrealism of Buñuel via a ritual of cannibalism that returns to the *antropofagia* of Oswald de Andrade.

Inasmuch as, according to Rocha, “Surrealism, for the Latin American people, is Tropicalism,” affinities between surrealist cinema and a tropicalist Cinema Novo are apparent in Rocha’s entire filmography, particularly in its representations of myth, magic, and the dream-like states of trance.²¹⁴ When Rocha filmed *Barravento*, he was admittedly Futurist, Dadaist, Surrealist, and Marxist at the same time due to his “confused” cultural background as a Latin American artist-intellectual.²¹⁵ Not surprisingly, *Barravento* presents a theological-materialist perspective of religious and social alienation in its depiction of characters commanded by magical forces and/or spiritual entities (*orixás*) from the Afro-Brazilian cult of *candomblé*, where trance and possession are the rule.²¹⁶ If *Barravento* reenacts the myth of a “moment of transformation” (*barravento*), *Deus e o diabo* reflects a teleological view of history in which mysticism prefigures the revolution, as the story presents possessed characters who likewise figure as unconscious agents for the unknown forces of destiny.²¹⁷ As previously mentioned, *Deus e o diabo* was inspired by both “the anarchy of Buñuel” and “the savage strength of the lunacy of surrealism.”²¹⁸ If Buñuel invokes the myth of a “golden age” in his surrealist classic, Rocha invokes the legend of a “city of gold” in his tropicalist masterpiece *Terra em transe*, whose setting is dis-placed in the “imaginary” country of Eldorado. Rocha nonetheless denies the influence of Buñuel and/or surrealism in the film, which instead is said to document the reality of a land entranced:

O que aconteceu com *Terra em transe* foi que muitas pessoas disseram tratar-se de uma invenção surrealista quando o filme era um documentário extremamente verdadeiro. Quando se estuda a sua técnica, ainda que o estilo seja bastante desigual, nota-se que, em planos muito diferentes, a câmera tem uma posição documental [...] Não há uma invenção surrealista, não se trata de um buñuelismo.²¹⁹

With a documentary style that relates to *cinema-vérité*, the Cinema Novo film was (mis)labeled as “baroque,” according to Rocha, because of the “confusion” between formalist montage techniques and an otherwise surrealist *mise-en-scène*.²²⁰ Such a “scenography” included carnivalesque scenes that recalled the (il)logic of dreams, and emblematic characters seemingly possessed by both psychic and political forces. The “trance” of a fictitious Eldorado figures as an allegory for a Latin America in the midst of a crisis and/or transition, a continent *en route* towards a cultural revolution provoked by the new aesthetic and ethical consciousness evoked by a *cinema novo*. The surreal, allegorical transfiguration of a real, historical moment would ultimately inspire the formation of the Tropicalist movement, which itself cannibalized a host of international (foreign) influences in order to renew national (native) traditions. The iconographic *O dragão da maldade*, with its cornucopia of mythical, magical, allegorical, emblematic, and carnivalesque elements, would in turn incorporate the tropicalism that reflected the real surrealism of Latin America.

Inasmuch as a Brazilian Cinema Novo emerged in dialogue with a French New Wave and an Italian Neo-Realism, it also arose as a response to the tradition of a modernist *cinéma d'art* that was born with the European avant-garde. For Latin American (neo) avant-garde movements, the aesthetics and politics of surrealism would propose a viable alternative to socialist realism as a revolutionary discourse against the repression and/or oppression of capitalism. As Rocha observes, “the historic function of surrealism in the oppressed Hispanic-American world was to be an instrument of thought toward anarchic liberation, the

only kind possible. It can be used dialectically today with deep political meaning to promote clarity and dissent.”²²¹ Rocha’s dialectical reading of surrealism in Latin America is incidentally akin to Benjamin’s reading of surrealism as “the last snapshot of the European intelligentsia,” whose ultimate “project” or “task” was to “win the energies of intoxication for the revolution.”²²² Benjamin likewise considers the passage of Surrealism from aestheticism to politicization, or “the transformation of a highly contemplative attitude into revolutionary opposition,” as the dialectical development of a “poetic politics.”²²³ Such a synthesis would resolve the apparent impasse between a bourgeois *l’art pour art* and a socialist *art engagée*. Freedom was always a real cause for the Surrealist movement, whose expressed aim was to channel the latent psychic energies of the unconscious into an active and conscious revolutionary force. As Breton writes in the “Manifesto of Surrealism” (1924), “if the depths of our mind contain within it strange forces capable of augmenting those on the surface, or of waging a victorious battle against them, there is every reason to seize them – first to seize them, then, if need be, to submit them to the control of our reason.”²²⁴ In Latin America and/or the Third World, the energy of the socially oppressed could only be generated through a liberation of the collective unconscious. The enemy was not only bourgeois capitalism, but also imperialist (neo)colonialism. What began as an aesthetics of hunger would thus evolve into an aesthetics of the dream, which attacks the very *raison d’être* of modernity and/or coloniality.

In “An Esthetic of Hunger,” Rocha had argued that only an aesthetics of violence could acquire a “revolutionary significance” in the struggle for freedom.²²⁵ In a later manifesto “A estética do sonho” (“An Aesthetics of the Dream” – 1971), he elaborates his position on the relationship between art and revolution, which is still eminently bound to the

theme of hunger. For Rocha, a vanguard “*revolutionary art*” must not only be aesthetic and political, but also “*irrational*,” inasmuch as a “conservative” reason itself constitutes a “colonizing” force. A break or “rupture” with rationalism would therefore be the only solution. Rocha thereby argues that the “vanguardas do pensamento não podem mais se dá ao sucesso inútil de responder à *razão opresiva* com a *razão revolucionária*. A revolução é a *anti-razão* que comunica as tensões e rebeliões do mais *irracional* de todos os fenômenos que é a *pobreza*.”²²⁶ Poverty not only has devastating social consequences, according to Rocha, but also (self)destructive psychic effects on the poor, who become “fatalist” and “submissive” to the reason that exploits them as “slaves.”²²⁷ Lacking any explanation for the absurdity of a (sub)human condition, the hungry also become “mystical.”²²⁸ Such an “*irrationalist*” mysticism, whether in the form of religion or politics, is in turn repressed by the dominant forces of reason.²²⁹ Revolution, as the “possession” of a man who devotes his life to an “idea,” is nonetheless believed to be the highest expression of mysticism, itself a “vital” aspect of poverty.²³⁰ A revolutionary art, such as *cinema novo*, must therefore commune with a popular mysticism, the only language that “transcends” an oppressive reason.²³¹ As such, a “liberating irrationalism” ultimately becomes “the strongest arm of the revolutionary,” according to Rocha.²³² If the “Aesthetics of Hunger” was admittedly “the measure of a rational comprehension of poverty,” the “Aesthetics of the Dream,” with its revolutionary “*anti-reason*” (or “*unreason*”), was decidedly the account of the irrational conception of mysticism, where hunger is once more related to a form of “tropical” or “concrete” surrealism. Exalting magic over science, Rocha’s manifesto thus culminates in a total rejection of the philosophical rationale of a bourgeois aesthetics altogether. As Rocha concludes: “Hoje recuso falar em qualquer estética. A plena vivência não pode se sujeitar a

conceitos filosóficos. *Arte revolucionária* deve ser uma mágica capaz de enfeitiçar o homem a tal ponto que ele não mais suporte viver nesta realidade absurda.”²³³ By invoking an otherwise surrealist dream aesthetics in a (magical) ritual of (cultural) cannibalism, a tropicalist Cinema Novo thereby liberates itself from the colonizing influence of the “bourgeois-aesthetics” of Europe, creating an altogether “new” revolutionary art.

tropicalism

In the development of Cinema Novo, the dialogue with contemporary “new” cinemas and the response to modernist and/or avant-garde cinema both prescribed the critical appropriation and/or original transformation of a universal cinematographic tradition via the cannibalization of an American “commercial-popular” aesthetics, a Soviet “populist-demagogic” aesthetics, and finally, a European “bourgeois-artistic” aesthetics. In Rocha’s account of the evolution of the movement, various phases or “moments” become apparent: the moment of “social protest,” the moment of “revolutionary euphoria,” and finally, the moment of “reflection, meditation, and deep searching.”²³⁴ In each moment there are evident “differences” in terms of cinematographic language, according to Rocha, “even in a single author.”²³⁵ Of these moments, the clearest distinction is between the “cinema before and after Tropicalism,” a revolutionary mo(ve)ment in Brazilian culture that included art, music, theater and the cinema.²³⁶ In the Tropicalist phase of Cinema Novo, filmmakers are finally unbound from the yoke of influence and become free to explore and/or “confront” a Brazilian and/or Latin American reality, “and all its meanings and depths,” via a “new” aesthetics based on a carnivalized form of (cultural) cannibalism.²³⁷ As Rocha observes:

Tropicalism, the anthropophagic discovery, was a revelation: it raised consciousness, altering attitudes about colonial culture. It didn’t reject

Western culture as in the beginning (which was crazy because we lack a methodology); Tropicalists accept the total *ricezione*, the ingestion of core methods of a complete and complex culture, and its transformation through *nostri succhi* and the utilization and elaborating of correct politics. With this discovery, the search for a new aesthetic, which is a new phenomenon, emerged.²³⁸

The Tropicalist movement, officially inaugurated by the artist Hélio Oiticica's installation "Tropicália" (1967) and the musician Caetano Veloso's anthem "Tropicália" (1968), was fundamentally inspired by the modernist *antropofagia* of Oswald de Andrade, which had recently been reevaluated by the Concretist movement. In dialogue with his European counterparts, Andrade had realized that the "primitivism" which represented the *other* face of modernism was already native to Brazil, that an exotic *difference* and/or *otherness* actually constituted the ex-centric identity of Latin America, and that the *alternative* anti-tradition of (cultural) cannibalism de-centered a Eurocentric modernity founded on coloniality. According to Rocha, Andrade "defined his cultural activism and his work [...] as anthropophagic. Referring to the tradition of anthropophagic Indians, he said that since they had eaten white men, they had eaten all Brazilian and colonial culture."²³⁹ With the parodic motto "Tupi, or not tupi that is the question," *antropofagia* would as such prescribe the "absorption" and "transformation" of the enemy into a totem, an emblematic figure that marks a "transfiguration" of (inter)national culture. The (ir)reverent assimilation of foreign influences to native traditions furthermore describes a process of transculturation that culminates in decolonization. Cinema Novo's (re)vision of (cultural) cannibalism would thereby lead Rocha to declare that "the development of Tropicalism and anthropophagy is the most important thing in Brazilian culture today."²⁴⁰

Exploring the signs and/or symbols of the language of myth, a reference for all "fundamental forms of cultural and artistic expression," a tropicalist Cinema Novo

re(dis)covers and/or renovates the (cultural) cannibalism of Brazilian *modernismo*.²⁴¹ If Tropicalism itself was inspired by the (neo)baroque (anti)drama *Terra em transe*, Rocha's subsequent film *O dragão da maldade* exhibits all the characteristic traits of the movement, where the avant-garde and the popular converge in a spirit of carnivalization. In addition to devouring consecrated *auteurs* such as Hawks, Eisenstein, and Godard, there are also "anthropophagic relationships" among the characters, according to Rocha, inasmuch as "the professor eats Antônio, Antônio eats the cangaceiro, Laura eats the commissioner, the professor eats Claudia, the murderers eat the people, the professor eats the cangaceiro."²⁴² Such an "anthropophagic relationship" is ultimately characterized by Rocha as "freedom."²⁴³ Winner of the Golden Palm award for best director at the 1969 Cannes Film Festival, Rocha would also mark his own liberation as a filmmaker with the realization of *O dragão da maldade*.²⁴⁴ If *Deus e o diabo* was admittedly more "bourgeois," the sequel was revolutionary, in part, because it was declaredly free from foreign influences.²⁴⁵ As a savage gesture of independence, a cinematographic anthropophagy thereby leads to cultural decolonization. Accordingly, other Tropicalist films invoke cannibalism as an antidote and/or counter-discourse to capitalist consumerism and/or imperialist neo-colonialism. For example, Nelson Pereira dos Santos' *Como era gostoso o meu francês* has been described as an "anthropological fiction" which suggests that an indigenous or native tradition should "metaphorically" cannibalize foreign influences, "appropriating their force without being dominated by them."²⁴⁶ After assimilating the (mistakenly believed to be Portuguese) Frenchman as a member of the tribe, the Tupinambá Indians finally devour their (white) captive as an act of vengeance via an anthropophagic ritual in which the conversion of a



Poster for *O dragão da maldade contra o santo guerreiro* (*Antônio das Mortes*)

European identity into an Amerindian *other* signifies and/or symbolizes the subversion of inimical colonial forces. As Santos himself observes:

The [film's] plot tries to recover that bit of Brazilian culture, which has been colonized for centuries. The theory of anthropophagy is one whereby the Brazilian (and Indian) assimilates foreign culture. The Indian ate his enemy to acquire his strength, not to feed himself physically. It was a ritual. The more powerful the enemy, the tastier he was thought to be.²⁴⁷

In *Como era gostoso o meu francês*, Rocha observes that Santos had wished to make “um documentário sobre as relações entre colonizadores e colonizados e sobre intercâmbios culturais.”²⁴⁸ In the same interview, Rocha reinforces the force of (cultural) cannibalism in Brazil: “É muito interessante, porque se a antropofagia não existe mais no Brasil como tal, há um espírito filosófico que se chama antropofágico.”²⁴⁹ Such a “philosophical spirit” would therefore characterize the (r)evolution of an “anthropophagic reason” in *modernismo*, *concretismo* and/or *tropicalismo* as an *other* thinking related to decolonization.

If Santos revisits the origins of a Brazilian and/or Latin American anthropophagic tradition in the 16th century, Joaquim Pedro de Andrade's *Macunaíma* reviews the evolution of (cultural) cannibalism into the 20th century. Considered to be the “high point of the Tropicalist movement in Brazilian cinema,” *Macunaíma* is said to represent “an extremely aggressive attack on the continued exploitation of Brazil by the international capitalist system.”²⁵⁰ The film also constitutes a scathing critique of Tropicalism itself, which the director has described as being full of hot air.²⁵¹ Based in part on the indigenous legend of “Makunaíma”(“Great Evil”), the mythical narrative recounts the (mis)adventures of an ambivalent and/or contradictory (anti)hero that synthesizes a Brazilian *mestizo* culture. Accordingly, cannibalism is a significant and recurrent theme in an otherwise carnivalesque parody of both folkloric and modern traditions. The protagonist Macunaíma is tricked into

swallowing the flesh of the dwarf Curupira (“Guardian of the Forest”); is sexually possessed by the guerilla nymph(o) Ci (“Mother of the Forest”); is captured and almost cooked by Ceiuci (“Gluttonous Old Woman”), the wife of Piaimã (“eater of people”); is fooled into almost eating his own testicles; and is finally devoured by the mermaid Uiara (“Mother of the Water”) in a scene that recalls the demise of the industrial and commercial “giant” Venceslau Pietro Pietra (Piaimã) in his own bacchanal *feijoada* of blood and gore. Cannibalism in *Macunaíma* thus becomes a savage form of consumption *par excellence* in a tragicomedy of bad manners.

In “Cannibalism and Self-Cannibalism” (1969), a text written as an introduction to the film, Andrade begins by stating that cannibalism is “an exemplary mode of consumerism adopted by underdeveloped peoples.”²⁵² After citing both the anthropophagic rituals of the Brazilian Indians and the “Cannibal Manifesto” of the Brazilian modernists, Andrade observes how Cinema Novo filmmakers “rediscover” a cannibalism that has long become a universal law of exchange:

Every consumer is reducible, in the last analysis, to cannibalism. The present work relationships, as well as the relationships between people – social, political, and economic – are still basically cannibalistic [...] Cannibalism has merely institutionalized itself, cleverly disguised itself. The new heroes, still looking for a collective consciousness, try to devour those who devour us. But still weak, they are themselves transformed into products by the media and consumed.²⁵³

As Andrade fatefully concludes, everybody and everything, “whether it be in the heart or in the jaw, is food to be consumed. Meanwhile, voraciously, nations devour their people.”²⁵⁴ As such, *Macunaíma* becomes “the story of a Brazilian devoured by Brazil,” of a Latin America still under the rule of an anthropophagy that tends to be more subservient than subversive.²⁵⁵ Utilizing a “sub-code” or “subtext” of “cannibalistic imagery,” according to

critic Randal Johnson, Andrade thus relates cannibalism to both capitalist and neo-colonialist “exploitation.”²⁵⁶ Despite the apparent disillusionment with Tropicalism and the evident critique of anthropophagy, the style of *Macunaíma* arguably incorporates the theory and practice of (cultural) cannibalism by adapting modernist elements of Mário de Andrade’s novel to an otherwise tropicalist mise-en-scène. If the original combines an avant-garde *modernismo* with traditions of popular culture such as Amerindian legends and African *candomblé*, the adaptation combines a (neo)vanguard *cinema novo* with traditions of “pop” culture such as the *chanchada*. Andrade himself asserts that he aspired to make “um filme sem estilo predeterminado. Seu estilo seria não ter estilo. Uma anti-arte, no sentido tradicional da arte.”²⁵⁷ Inspired by a dystopian vision of (cultural) cannibalism, the director of *Macunaíma* thus reinterprets a “hero without any character” in his own *film without any style*. As such, a revolutionary and popular “anti-art” cinema would ultimately represent the culmination of Cinema Novo.

In a final manifesto titled “From the Drought to the Palm Trees” (1970), a retrospective analysis of the evolution of the movement from an aesthetics of “hunger” and “violence” to an aesthetics of the “dream,” Rocha observes that “Cinema Novo is starting to take on the look of Brazilian cinema itself.”²⁵⁸ The “peasants” of cinema who had “planted” on “dry land” have survived the “drought,” and Cinema Novo and/or Brazilian cinema “now has the palm trees of Tropicalism.” A tropicalist cinema thereby comes to realize the utopian dream of a “revolutionary/popular” aesthetics in films such as *O dragão da maldade* and *Macunaíma*. According to Rocha, *Macunaíma* was so popular because it is “madly original” in its representation of a *mestizo* Brazilian “devoured by his own madness.”²⁵⁹ In words that

recall Andrade's formulations on (self) cannibalism, Rocha nonetheless ponders over the future of the Cinema Novo movement, which was already too old to be new:

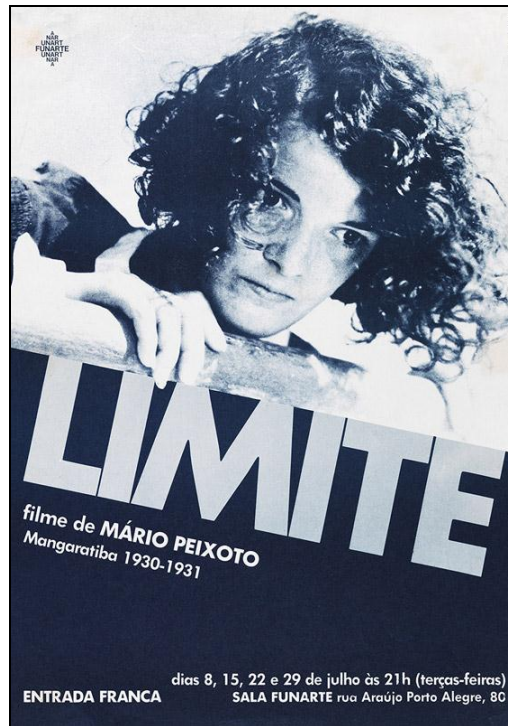
I wonder if we should put an end to Cinema Novo in its Tropicalist incarnation. Let's wait for the fire next time. Fire must devour Cinema Novo just as Iara devours Macunaíma. But before being devoured, Cinema Novo must devour the Brazilian market, itself devoured by imperialist cinema. It should also devour the stupid snobbery of our intellectuals, devoured by "culture." Cinema Novo should provoke fiery indigestion, be devoured by its own fire, and be reborn from its own ashes.²⁶⁰

Evoking the ancient myth of the phoenix, Rocha relates the (re)incarnation and the (self) cannibalism of Cinema Novo, arguing that the movement must consume and be consumed in order to realize its ultimate consummation. As such, anthropophagy once more prefigures a counter-discourse that would devour the cinema itself in order to fight fire with fire, and to oppose causes with effects. As a multi-national capitalism consumes the world, an imperialist (neo)colonialism subsumes the Third World, which is in turn forced into a state of dependency and/or underdevelopment. In the 1960s, when "dependency theory" was *en vogue*, Latin American artist-intellectuals would thereby arrive at the realization that, as Rocha observes, "underdevelopment was total."

From its start, Brazilian cinema understood this totality and the necessity of overcoming it completely – aesthetically, philosophically, economically – overcoming underdevelopment through means that are typical of underdevelopment.²⁶¹

In order to "overcome" underdevelopment, Cinema Novo begins by challenging the assumption that economic underdevelopment corresponds to cultural underdevelopment, and by inaugurating an aesthetics of "hunger" that would constitute a sublimation of misery and a transmutation of poverty into a source of material for a "new," original cinema. In the passage from an aesthetics of "violence" to an aesthetics of the "dream," the language of myth and the force of mysticism become the unconscious expressions of a utopian vision: a

revolutionary and popular cinema free of outside influence(s) after the struggle for decolonization. With the (neo)vanguard return to modernist anthropophagy, Tropicalism would mark the “acceptance” and/or “rise” of underdevelopment, according to Rocha, the ultimate confrontation with a Brazilian and/or Latin American (sur)reality that was the (side)effect of modernity and/or coloniality.²⁶² The practice of (cultural) cannibalism represents the transculturation of foreign (universal) models and native (local) traditions that are always already *under* development. Cinema Novo’s critical appropriation and original transformation of European (and American) cinema thereby complement the evolution of a Brazilian and/or Latin American cinema that had emerged and developed at the margins or periphery of world cinema. Not only was there the art cinema of Mário Peixoto’s *Limite* (“Limit” – 1931) and Humberto Mauro’s *Ganga Bruta* (“Brutal Gang” – 1933), created in dialogue with the European avant-garde, but there was also the popular cinema of the *chanchada*, produced in response to American Hollywood musicals. In the end, a *cinema novo* would represent, via a universal cinematographic language and/or writing, its ex-centric (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness* in the form of a Latin American tropicalism that re(dis)covers the counter-discourse of (cultural) cannibalism in an aesthetics of “hunger” and/or “violence” whose “dream” would be to inspire a tricontinental mo(ve)ment of decolonization.



Poster for *Limite*



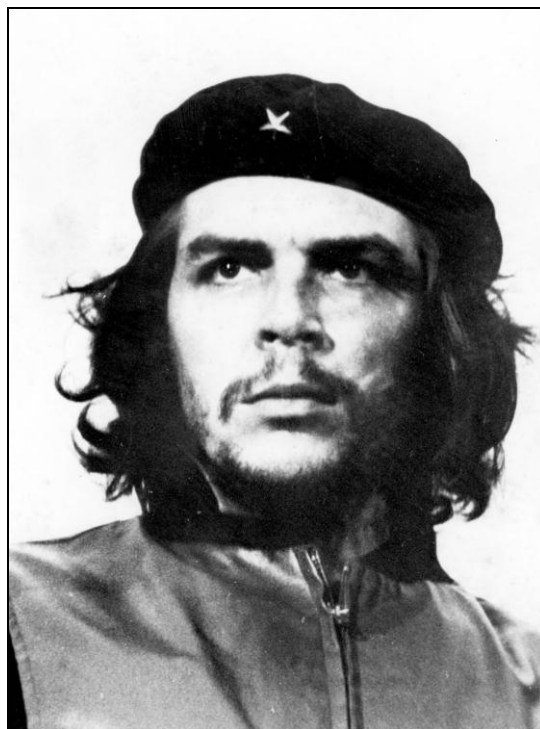
Poster for *Ganga Bruta*

Once the warrior slays the dragon and the desert turns into the sea, a reality of hunger and drought realizes the dream of carnival and palm trees. The dawn of a new cinema in the New World would thus arise in the form of a new, popular, and revolutionary aesthetics that is both dialectical and anthropophagic, a creative synthesis of European (and American) and Latin American cinematographic traditions. A nationalist cinema with an internationalist discourse, Cinema Novo would eventually evolve into a tricontinental movement uniting the Americans, Africans, and Asians of the Third World in the struggle for cultural decolonization. This section presents the evolution of Cinema Novo into a “Tricontinental cinema” of “guerrilla” filmmakers. It relates the movement to both the development of a Third Cinema, as propagated by filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, and the existence of a “minor” cinema, as proposed by philosopher Gilles Deleuze. Finally, it considers Cinema Novo not only as a form of “nomad thought” but also as a mode of “border thinking” formulated from a “Third Space,” as outlined by critic Homi Bhabha.

In a manifesto originally titled “*Cela s’appelle l’aurore: le cinéaste tricontinental*” (“The Tricontinental Filmmaker: That is Called the Dawn – 1967”), Glauber Rocha appropriates strategies for an aesthetic and political revolution from both Surrealism and Marxism, citing Buñuel’s *Cela s’appelle l’aurore* (1956) and Ernesto “Che” Guevara’s “Mensaje a los pueblos del mundo a través de la Tricontinental” (“Message to the Tricontinental” – 1967).²⁶³ The epic heroes of Ford or Eisenstein are no match for the real character of Guevara, who represents the “true revolutionary” according to Rocha. Guevara’s “message” of “liberation” would, as such, inspire Rocha’s discourse of freedom in the form of a “Tricontinental” cinema. As Guevara proclaims: “America, a forgotten



Poster for *Cela s'appelle l'aurore*



“Guerrillero Heroico” (Ernesto “Che” Guevara) – Taken by Alberto Korda (1960)

continent in the last liberation struggles, is now beginning to make itself heard through the Tricontinental in the voice of the vanguard of its peoples.”²⁶⁴ At the vanguard of a *cinéma d’art*, meanwhile, Buñuel liberates the collective unconscious from the repression and/or oppression of bourgeois and/or capitalist institutions. If “Buñuel’s films displace the conventions of the continental cinema,” as Rocha observes, a Tricontinental cinema must in turn “infiltrate the conventional cinema and blow it up.”²⁶⁵ With such revolutionary rhetoric, Cinema Novo becomes the foundation of a Tricontinental cinema that expresses its aesthetics of “hunger” and/or “violence” as both “ideology” and “discourse.” As Rocha asserts:

Cinema is an international discourse and national situations do not justify, at any level, denial of expression. In the case of Tricontinental cinema, esthetics have more to do with ideology than with technique, and the technical myths of the zoom, of direct cinema, of the hand-held camera and of the uses of color are nothing more than tools for expression. The operative word is *ideology*, and it knows no geographical boundaries.²⁶⁶

Inasmuch as a Brazilian Cinema Novo was riding the tide of a French New Wave, Rocha would base the development of a Tricontinental cinema on the work of Godard, which is said to open up “a guerilla-like operation in the cinema.”²⁶⁷ Godard’s sociopolitical film-essays not only propose the deconstruction of a bourgeois concept of representation, but also “a strategy, a valuable set of tactics, usable in any part of the world,” according to Rocha.²⁶⁸ The Tricontinental filmmaker in turn becomes a freedom-fighter in an insurgent aesthetics of resistance. As a form of “combat,” a “guerilla cinema” emerges as “the cinema one improvises outside the conventional production structure against formal conventions imposed on the general public and on the elite.”²⁶⁹ Traversing borders and transgressing the orders of the powers-that-be, a Tricontinental *cinema novo* thus operates in the (non) *space-in-between* of an ex-centric *difference* and/or *otherness* expressed via a new cinematographic language and/or writing.

With its guerrilla strategies and/or tactics, the Tricontinental cinema inspired the development of an “underground” and/or “marginal” cinema in Brazil, Latin America, and the rest of the Third World. In a new manifesto titled “Hacia un tercer cine: Apuntes y experiencias para el desarrollo de un cine de liberación en el tercer mundo” (“Towards a Third Cinema: Notes and Experiences for the Development of a Cinema of Liberation in the Third World” – 1969), which was incidentally published in the magazine *Tricontinental*, the revolutionary Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino radicalize Rocha’s anti-colonial program, or project, in their foundation of an anti-imperialist Third Cinema:

The anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples of the Third World and of their equivalents inside the imperialist countries constitutes today the axis of the world revolution. *Third cinema* is, in our opinion, the cinema that *recognizes in that struggle the most gigantic cultural, scientific and artistic manifestation of our time*, the great possibility of constructing a liberated personality with each people as the starting point – in a word, the *decolonisation of culture*.²⁷⁰

Promoting a low-budget, independent film production strategy and a *politique des auteurs*, the various new (art) cinemas represent, for Solanas and Getino, an alternative to the Hollywood model(s) of American cinema, which is referred to as the *first cinema*:

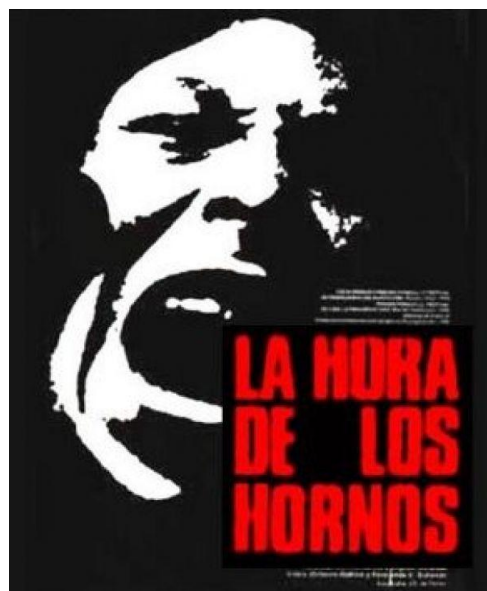
The first alternative to this type of cinema, which we could call the *first cinema*, arose with the so-called “author’s cinema,” “expression cinema,” “*nouvelle vague*,” “*cinema novo*,” or, conventionally, the *second cinema*. This alternative signified a step forward inasmuch as it demanded that the filmmaker be free to express himself in non-standard language and inasmuch as it was an attempt at cultural decolonisation.²⁷¹

Despite recognizing the (dis)concerted effort by a *cinéma d’auteur* to attain freedom and independence from bourgeois and/or capitalist institutions, Solanas and Getino argue that examples of *second cinema* such as Cinema Novo were reaching “the outer limits of what the system permits,” and that the search to conquer (inter)national markets by producing and

distributing independent and/or decolonized films was ultimately “a search lacking in viable prospects.”²⁷² The only “real” and/or “viable” alternative would therefore be a liberated *third cinema* that fights against the “system.” As Solanas and Getino assert:

Real alternatives differing from those offered by the System are only possible if one of two requirements is fulfilled: *making films that the System cannot assimilate and which are foreign to its needs, or making films that directly and explicitly set out to fight the System.* Neither of these requirements fits within the alternatives that are still offered by the *second cinema*, but they can be found in the revolutionary opening towards a cinema outside and against the System, in a cinema of liberation: the *third cinema*.²⁷³

Although the development of a marginal *tercer cine* constitutes a reaction to the evolution of *cinema novo* from a vanguard to a popular cinema, it is also true that the Third Cinema movement is essentially an outgrowth of the Tricontinental cinema. For example, if Rocha had argued for a documentary-style “cinema-truth,” Solanas and Getino proposed the documentary as “the main basis of revolutionary film-making.”²⁷⁴ If Cinema Novo had not been afraid to confront underdevelopment by means of underdevelopment, the Third Cinema did not fear “recognising the particularities and limitations of dependency in order to discover the *possibilities inherent in that situation* by finding ways of overcoming it *which would of necessity be original.*”²⁷⁵ Insisting on a “guerrilla cinema,” Rocha shot *Terra em transe* with the intention of launching a “bomb.”²⁷⁶ Echoing the call for a “guerrilla cinema,” Solanas and Getino shot *La hora de los hornos* (*The Hour of the Furnaces* – 1970) with the idea that the camera is both a “rifle” and “the inexhaustible expropriator of image-weapons; the projector, a gun that can shoot 24 frames per second.”²⁷⁷ Inasmuch as a “guerrilla cinema” is “the only cinema of the masses possible today, since it is the only one involved with the interests, aspirations, and prospects of the vast majority of the people,” both the Tricontinental cinema and the Third Cinema are produced by “guerrilla” filmmakers who



Poster for *La hora de los hornos*

struggle to liberate the people via cultural decolonization. As Solanas and Getino observe:

The man of the third cinema, be it guerrilla cinema or a film act, with the infinite categories that they contain (film letter, film poem, film essay, film pamphlet, film report, etc.), above all counters the film industry of a cinema of characters with one of themes, that of individuals with that of masses, that of the author with that of the operative group, one of neocolonial misinformation with one of information, one of escape with one that recaptures the truth, that of passivity with that of aggressions. To an institutionalised cinema, it counterposes a guerrilla cinema; to movies as shows, it opposes a film act or action; to a cinema of destruction, one that is both destructive and constructive; to a cinema made for the old kind of human being, for them, it opposes a cinema fit for a new kind of human being, for what each one of us has the possibility of becoming.²⁷⁸

In envisaging a “new man” à la Fanon, who is incidentally cited in *La hora de los hornos*, in imagining a “new kind of human being,” the Third Cinema not only focuses on social revolution but also on individual evolution as both a means and an end. Inasmuch as “the colonized man liberates himself in and through violence,” as Fanon argues, Solanas and Getino assert that there is a battle to be fought not only “without, against the enemy who attacks us, but also within, against the ideas and models of the enemy to be found inside each one of us.”²⁷⁹ In the struggle for freedom, a Third Cinema thereby opposes the colonization of minds with a “revolution of consciousness” which might lead oneself to become an *other*.²⁸⁰

Upon invoking a Tricontinental cinema, Rocha believed he had already made the first incursions of a “guerrilla cinema” in *Barravento*, *Deus e o diabo*, and *Terra em transe*, films that represent “the disasters of a violent transition” in Latin American art and culture, a rite of passage for the peoples of the Third World, where the vast minority become a collective *ensemble* in a “minor” cinema with major consequences. Referring to Rocha’s filmography, Gilles Deleuze observes how such a “transition,” “passage,” or “becoming” is realized via

the exploration of myth and the dream-like state of trance, which prefigures the “invention” of a people. According to Deleuze:

His [Rocha’s] internal critique would first isolate a lived present beneath the myth, which could be intolerable, the unbelievable, the impossibility of living now in “this” society [...] then he had to seize from the unliving a speech-act which could not be forced into silence, an act of story-telling which would not be a return to myth but a production of collective utterances capable of raising misery to a strange positivity, the invention of a people [...] The trance, the putting into trances, are a transition, a passage, or a becoming; it is the trance which makes the speech-act possible, through the ideology of the colonizer, the myths of the colonized and the discourse of the intellectual. The author puts the parties in trances in order to contribute to the invention of his people who, alone, can constitute the whole [*ensemble*].²⁸¹

The possibility of “raising misery to a strange positivity,” which would constitute “the invention of a people,” in addition to the idea that an alteration of consciousness, via the trance, relates to the alteration of reality, is a guiding principle in *Terra em transe*, as evident in Rocha’s own commentary about the film, which is said to represent the “grotesque” and “horrible” aspects of poverty in Latin America. As Rocha observes: “Não existe nada de positivo na América Latina a não ser a dor, a miséria, isto é, o positivo é justamente o que se considera negativo. Porque é a partir daí que se pode construir uma civilização que tem um caminho enorme a seguir.”²⁸² For Rocha, misery thus becomes “positive” inasmuch as it leads to the “construction” of a “civilization.” Based on these and other observations it becomes evident that Cinema Novo, besides prescribing the formation of a Tricontinental (or Third) cinema, also previews the formulation of a “minor” cinema, which could initially be defined in terms of Deleuze and Guattari’s “minor literature.” A *minor* cinema, as such, would not be the cinema of a “minor [cinematographic] language” but would instead be a cinema “that a minority makes in a major [cinematographic] language.”²⁸³ The principle characteristics of a “minor” cinema would be that (cinematographic) language is affected by

“deterritorialization,” that everything is inherently “political,” and that everything assumes a “collective value.”²⁸⁴ For Deleuze, myth as a form of “story-telling” and/or “speech-act” would also be of fundamental significance for a “minor” cinema, both concealing and revealing an “actual” and/or “lived” (collective) experience. For Rocha, myth (or mythology) is essentially “ideogrammatic,” the unconscious “signs (symbols)” of a culture that must in turn be expressed in a cinematographic language and/or writing. As Rocha asserts: “To speak about language and myth is of fundamental importance. It’s the core of our problem. If we are moving toward total global revolution, language must be understood in the Marxist sense, as an expression of consciousness.”²⁸⁵ In order to beat if not “compete with the imperialist system,” the Tricontinental filmmaker must therefore make films that “directly reach the collective unconscious, the most true and deep disposition of a people.”²⁸⁶ Cinema Novo as such becomes “an aesthetic-political search that operates under the sign of the individualization of the collective unconscious,” making “critical use of familiar forms of popular culture.” For Deleuze, Rocha’s critique of myth is ultimately “not a matter of analyzing myth in order to discover its archaic meaning or structure, but of connecting archaic myth to the state of the drives in an absolutely contemporary society, hunger, thirst, sexuality, power, death, worship.”²⁸⁷ Myth is therefore both the transfiguration of a history and the transcription of an unconscious that are ever present and/or conscious in the current moment.

If the dream aesthetics of a *cinema novo* understood language and/or myth to be an “expression of consciousness” that would serve to realize the revolution, the trance theoretics of a “minor” cinema nonetheless recognizes that such a consciousness was lacking due to the absence of a people. As Deleuze explains:

The death knell for becoming conscious was precisely the consciousness that there were no people, but always several people, who remained to be united, or should not be united, in order for the problem to change. It is in this way that third world cinema is a cinema of minorities, because the people exist only in the condition of minority, which is why they are missing.²⁸⁸

In response to the question of a Third World cinema, Deleuze might therefore ask: one or several people? Rocha likewise perceives that the people, his “audience,” are “segmented.”²⁸⁹ Arguing against the conservative (colonial) rationalism of Leftist rhetoric, he elsewhere asserts that “the People are the myth of the bourgeoisie.”²⁹⁰ Such a myth nonetheless underwrites the dialectics of a revolutionary and popular discourse that synthesizes aesthetics and politics in a Tricontinental cinema that declaredly seeks to be “epic-didactic.” A “modern” political cinema, according to Deleuze, would thereby be based on the promise of a people to come:

This acknowledgment of a people who are missing is not a renunciation of political cinema, but on the contrary the new basis on which it is founded, in the third world and for minorities. Art, and especially cinematographic art, must take part in this task: not that of addressing a people, which is presupposed already there, but of contributing to the invention of a people. The moment the master, or the colonizer, proclaims “There have never been people here,” the missing people are a becoming, they invent themselves, in shanty towns and camps, or in ghettos, in new conditions of struggle to which a necessarily political art must contribute.²⁹¹

Like Godard, who believed that Latin American filmmakers such as Rocha were in an “ideal” situation to create a “revolutionary” cinema, Deleuze imagines that minority filmmakers in the Third World are in a real position to formulate a (modern) political cinema.²⁹² Rocha’s realization of a *cinema novo* thus arguably corresponds to Deleuze’s theorization of a “minor” cinema and/or literature: the “deterritorialization of language” relates to the cannibalization of European (and American) cinema, the “connection of the individual to a political immediacy” relates to the fusion of the private and the public that is

characteristic of (national) allegory, and the “collective assemblage of enunciation” relates to the (ideogrammatic) structure of popular myth. Ultimately, the Tricontinental (or Third) cinema becomes that which a Third World “minority” constructs within a “major” or universal cinematographic tradition.

As a “minor” cinema, Cinema Novo would seem to be the expression of a “nomad thought” were it not also and/or instead an expression of “border thinking,” where the line of flight is redrawn to mark the outline(s) of a *space-in-between*. Flight or fight? That becomes the question. Just as the Franco-Swiss Godard does not understand and/or acknowledge the *otherness* of the Brazilian Rocha, confusing the need for a cinema of deconstruction with the necessities of a cinema *under* construction, Deleuze does not comprehend and/or recognize the (colonial) *difference* of Latin America. If decolonization, not deconstruction, is the ultimate goal, then deterritorialization and/or decodification must be re-thought in terms of the borders, limits, and/or margins of Occidental culture. For critic Homi Bhabha, whose *The Location of Culture* (1994) both intelligently and unintelligibly re-locates culture at the boundaries of a *beyond within*, the interstices of an *in-between* demarcate a “Third Space” as the intersubjective *locus* of a process of revisions and/or reinscriptions performed by a hybrid cultural identity. In a theoretical article originally published in *Questions of Third Cinema*, Bhabha defines and/or describes such a “Third Space” in terms of a (pre)conceived “linguistic difference that informs any cultural performance,” namely, the semiotic “disjuncture” between the “subject of a proposition (*énoncé*) and the subject of enunciation.”²⁹³ Following the distinction made by the linguist Émile Benveniste, a *differentiation* which would become significant for the development of (post)structuralism, Bhabha reiterates that there is a subject *represented* (in the fact of the *said*), which is situated

in the here and now of the statement, and a subject *presented* (in the act of the *saying*), which is positioned in the time and space of reference.²⁹⁴ Since the “pact of interpretation” is not only an “act of communication” between the subject of discourse (“I”) and the object of address (“You”), the “production of meaning” would require that both positions, or “places,” be “mobilized in the passage through a Third Space,” which is said to represent the conditions of possibility of language itself.²⁹⁵ The “Third Space” therefore becomes a space of production and/or interpretation in which “meaning” is marked by a fundamental “ambivalence” that differentiates “content” from “context.”²⁹⁶ For Bhabha, the “implication” of such a *difference* for cultural studies is that the temporal “splitting” of the subject of enunciation, in effect, “destroys the logics of synchronicity and evolution which traditionally authorize the subject of cultural knowledge.”²⁹⁷ The problem is no longer a question of identity and difference, of originality and imitation, of development and underdevelopment, of colonizing and colonized. As Bhabha observes:

The intervention of the Third Space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code [...] It is only when we understand that all cultural statements are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation, that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or “purity” of cultures are untenable, even before we resort to empirical historical instances that demonstrate their hybridity [...] It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricised and read anew.²⁹⁸

As a site of displacement, disjunction, and/or disruption, a “Third Space” that is the prerequisite of the enunciation of “linguistic difference” thus becomes “the precondition for the articulation of cultural difference.”²⁹⁹ Returning to the *question* of a Third Cinema,

Bhabha ultimately (trans)poses the problem in geographical terms, dis-locating the Third Space in the Third World:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or post-colonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory [...] may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the "inter" – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture.³⁰⁰

By means of a theory and practice of critical appropriation and original transformation of universal "signs" that are effectively re-read and/or re-written in the context of (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness*, Cinema Novo is produced from such a Third Space, which becomes a utopian (non) *space-in-between* where a hybrid culture performs an aesthetic and political in(ter)vention in the form of a tricontinental mo(ve)ment outlined by a revolutionary counter-discourse of (cultural) cannibalism, which would in turn prefigure the emergence of a new, *international* Third (World) Cinema.



Saint George and the Dragon

¹ Glauber Rocha, *O século de cinema* (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2006), 345.

² Quoted in David Parkinson, *History of Film* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 185.

³ See: Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 33.

⁴ André Bazin, "On the *politique des auteurs*," in *The New Wave*, ed. Peter Graham (Secker & Warburg, 1968).

⁵ Alexandre Astruc, "Naissance d'une nouvelle avant-garde: La caméra-stylo," in *L'Ecran français* 144 (1948).

⁶ Jean-Luc Godard, *Godard on Godard*, trans. and ed. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo Press, 1986), 171.

⁷ Robert Stam, *Film Theory: An Introduction* (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 86-87.

⁸ Stam, *Film Theory*, 87-88.

⁹ José Carlos Avellar, "Nem de Deus nem do Diabo," in *O século de cinema*, by Glauber Rocha (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2006), 380.

¹⁰ Truffaut refers to the so-called "tradition of quality" in France in the essay "Une certaine tendance du cinéma français" ("A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema" – 1954), *Cahiers du cinéma* 31(1954).

¹¹ Glauber Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2004), 128-129.

¹² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 135.

¹³ Carlos Diegues, "A Dream That Came True," *FIPRESCI: The International Federation of Film Critics*, last modified February 15, 2009, http://www.fipresci.org/world_cinema/south/south_english_brazilian_cinema_glauber_rocha_carlos_diegues.htm.

¹⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 78.

¹⁵ Quoted in Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 33.

¹⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 168; Truffaut, "Une certaine tendance."

¹⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 232.

¹⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 60.

¹⁹ Stam, *Film Theory*, 96; Frederic Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," *Social Text* 15 (1986), 65-88, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/466493>.

²⁰ Cesare Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema," *Sight and Sound* 23:2 (1953), 64-69. Edited from a recorded interview published in *La Revista del Cinema Italiano*, December 1952. Trans. Pier Luigi Lanza.

²¹ Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema."

²² Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema."

²³ Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema."

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- ²⁴ Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema."
- ²⁵ Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema."
- ²⁶ André Bazin, "De Sica: Metteur en Scène." *What is Cinema?* Vol. 2, trans. Hugh Gray (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 66.
- ²⁷ Bazin, "De Sica: Metteur en Scène," 67.
- ²⁸ Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema."
- ²⁹ Quoted in Stam, *Film Theory*, 94.
- ³⁰ Alex Viany, quoted in Glauber Rocha, *Revisão crítica do cinema brasileiro* (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2003), 100.
- ³¹ Johnson and Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema*, 32.
- ³² Glauber Rocha, *Revisão crítica do cinema brasileiro* (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2003), 106.
- ³³ Rocha, *Revisão crítica do cinema brasileiro*, 111.
- ³⁴ Glauber Rocha, *O século de cinema*, (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2006), 343.
- ³⁵ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 52; 133.
- ³⁶ Glauber Rocha, "An Esthetic of Hunger," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 69-71.
- ³⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 177.
- ³⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 81.
- ³⁹ Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, "Criticism and Self-Criticism," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 73-75.
- ⁴⁰ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 82.
- ⁴¹ Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes, "Cinema: A Trajectory within Underdevelopment," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 245.
- ⁴² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 131.
- ⁴³ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 131.
- ⁴⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 202-203.
- ⁴⁵ Andrade, "Criticism and Self-Criticism," 73-75.
- ⁴⁶ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 37.
- ⁴⁷ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 46.

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- ⁴⁸ André Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 1* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 37.
- ⁴⁹ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol.1*, 35.
- ⁵⁰ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol.1*, 35.
- ⁵¹ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol.1*, 37.
- ⁵² Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol.1*, 37.
- ⁵³ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 202-203.
- ⁵⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 39-40.
- ⁵⁵ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 40.
- ⁵⁶ Stam, *Film Theory*, 101.
- ⁵⁷ Ismail Xavier, preface to *Revolução do cinema novo*, by Glauber Rocha (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2004), 16; Ismail Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment: Aesthetics and Politics in Modern Brazilian Cinema* (Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 37.
- ⁵⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 191.
- ⁵⁹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 191.
- ⁶⁰ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 191.
- ⁶¹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 48.
- ⁶² Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 29-30.
- ⁶³ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 30.
- ⁶⁴ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 30.
- ⁶⁵ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 31.
- ⁶⁶ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 32.
- ⁶⁷ Jean Mitry, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, trans. Christopher King (Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 1997), 13-14.
- ⁶⁸ Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. Michael Taylor (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 42.
- ⁶⁹ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol.1*, 16.
- ⁷⁰ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 1*, 111.
- ⁷¹ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 1*, 112.
- ⁷² Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol.1*, 136.

⁷³ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. I*, 75.

⁷⁴ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. I*, 38.

⁷⁵ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. I*, 39.

⁷⁶ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. I*, 39.

⁷⁷ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. I*, 39-40.

⁷⁸ Mitry, *Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, 15.

⁷⁹ Mitry, *Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, 15.

⁸⁰ Mitry, *Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, 15.

⁸¹ Metz, *Film Language*, 47.

In *Language and Cinema*, Metz furthermore considers the various notions of “filmic writing” in relation to “recording,” “transmission,” “printing,” “composition,” “writing” (“écriture”), and “ideography.” See: Christian Metz, *Language and Cinema*, trans. Donna Jean Umiker-Sebeok (The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton, 1974), 254-284.

⁸² Metz, *Film Language*, 47-48.

⁸³ Quoted in Patrick Rumble and Bart Testa, eds., *Pier Paolo Pasolini: contemporary perspectives* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 128.

“Il linguaggio della realtà, fin che era naturale, era fuori della nostra coscienza: ora che ci appare ‘scritto’ attraverso il cinema, non può non richiedere una coscienza. Il linguaggio scritto della realtà, ci farà sapere prima di tutto che cos’è il linguaggio della realtà; e finirà infine col modificare il nostro pensiero su di essa, facendo dei nostri rapporti fisici, almeno, con la realtà, dei rapporti culturali.”

⁸⁴ Glauber Rocha, *O século do cinema* (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2006), 188; See also: Matheus Chiaratti, “Glauber Rocha e Pasolini: quando o primeiro e o terceiro mundo se confundem no cinema.” *Rua: Revista Universitária do audiovisual*. 45 (2012), <http://www.ufscar.br/rua/site/?p=1101>.

⁸⁵ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 256. See also: Chiaratti, “Glauber Rocha e Pasolini.”

⁸⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 76.

⁸⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 75.

⁸⁸ David Parkinson, *History of Film* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 72.

⁸⁹ Dziga Vertov, quoted in Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: a history of the non-fiction film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 58.

⁹⁰ Vertov, in *Documentary*, 58.

⁹¹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 76.

⁹² Quoted in Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 50.

⁹³ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 318.

“That way is the unknown cinema of aesthetic adventure and philosophical speculation. And this way is third world cinema, a dangerous, divine, marvelous cinema where the questions are practical ones ...” Quoted in Stam, *Film Theory*, 99-100.

⁹⁴ See Mateus Araújo, “Godard, Glauber e o Vento do leste: alegoria de um (des)encontro,” in *Devires: Cinema e Humanidades* 4:1, <http://guaciara.wordpress.com/2009/03/29/godard-glauber-e-o-vento-do-leste-alegoria-de-um-desencontro-por-mateus-araujo/>.

⁹⁵ See Jean-Luc Godard, *Le Vent d’est* (1970; Italy/France/West Germany).

⁹⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 365.

⁹⁷ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 345.

⁹⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 167.

⁹⁹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 168.

¹⁰⁰ See: Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 215.

¹⁰¹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 350.

¹⁰² See: Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 345.

¹⁰³ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 112; 210.

¹⁰⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 239.

¹⁰⁵ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 167.

¹⁰⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 123.

¹⁰⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 201.

¹⁰⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 52.

¹⁰⁹ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 4.

¹¹⁰ Jameson, “Third World Literature,” 65.

¹¹¹ Jameson, “Third World Literature,” 69.

¹¹² Jameson, “Third World Literature,” 69.

¹¹³ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 15.

¹¹⁴ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 16.

¹¹⁵ See: Johnson and Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema*, 34.

¹¹⁶ See: Johnson and Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema*, 35.

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- ¹¹⁷ Quoted in Johnson and Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema*, 35.
- ¹¹⁸ See: Johnson and Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema*, 36.
- ¹¹⁹ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 19.
- ¹²⁰ Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (New York: Verso, 1998), 162; 175.
- ¹²¹ Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 208.
- ¹²² Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 231.
- ¹²³ Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 184.
- ¹²⁴ Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 184.
- ¹²⁵ Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 214.
- ¹²⁶ Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 175.
- ¹²⁷ Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 167.
- ¹²⁸ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 19.
- ¹²⁹ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 17.
- ¹³⁰ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 20.
- ¹³¹ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 20.
- ¹³² Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 20.
- ¹³³ Jameson, "Third World Literature," 73.
- ¹³⁴ Jameson, "Third World Literature," 74.
- ¹³⁵ Metz, *Language and Cinema*, 183.
- ¹³⁶ Metz, *Language and Cinema*, 183.
- ¹³⁷ Glauber Rocha, "Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol," *Tempo Glauber*, accessed July 10, 2012, <http://www.tempoglauber.com.br/glauber/Filmografia/diabo.htm>.
- ¹³⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 214.
- ¹³⁹ See: Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 330.
- ¹⁴⁰ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 52.
- ¹⁴¹ Glauber Rocha, "From the Drought to the Palm Trees," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 88.
- ¹⁴² Rocha, "From the Drought to the Palm Trees," 88.

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- ¹⁴³ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 184.
- ¹⁴⁴ Rocha, "From the Drought to the Palm Trees," 89.
- ¹⁴⁵ Rocha, "From the Drought to the Palm Trees," 89.
- ¹⁴⁶ Glauber Rocha, "An Esthetic of Hunger," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 70.
- ¹⁴⁷ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁴⁸ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁴⁹ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 68.
- ¹⁵⁰ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁵¹ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁵² Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁵³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 1.
- ¹⁵⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*, by Frantz Fanon, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), lvii-lviii.
- ¹⁵⁵ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁵⁶ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 71.
- ¹⁵⁷ Rocha, "Esthetic of Hunger," 70.
- ¹⁵⁸ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 115-116.
- ¹⁵⁹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 116.
- ¹⁶⁰ See Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 115-118.
- ¹⁶¹ Glauber Rocha, "The Tricontinental Filmmaker: That is Called the Dawn," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 79-80.
- ¹⁶² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 125.
- ¹⁶³ Glauber Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram," trans. Christopher Dunn, Aaron Lorenz and Renata Nascimento, in *Tropicália*, accessed July 10, 2012, <http://tropicalia.com.br/en/eubioticamente-atraidos/verbo-tropicalista/tropicalismo-antropofagia-mito>.

Note: the translation has an error which has been corrected here. The original reads:

"Uma inversão estrutural do gênero *western* pode ser muito interessante e útil para nós diretamente. É importante o *western*, não somente para mim. Nós somos um povo ligado historicamente à saga, à épica. Nós temos uma grande tradição filosófica; e é um mal. Mas seria um mal maior uma filosofia de importação que não corresponde à história. Por isto a antropofagia é mais importante." See: Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 152.

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- ¹⁶⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 214-215.
- ¹⁶⁵ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 276.
- ¹⁶⁶ Ismail Xavier, "O século do cinema e as formas da cultura: o imperativo da grandeza," in Glauber Rocha, *O século de cinema* (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2006), 23.
- ¹⁶⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 216.
- ¹⁶⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 248.
- ¹⁶⁹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 330.
- ¹⁷⁰ See Robert Stam, "Land in Anguish," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
- ¹⁷¹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 240.
- ¹⁷² Lino Micciché, in *Revolução do cinema novo*, by Glauber Rocha (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2004), 240.
- ¹⁷³ Metz, *Language and Cinema*, 183.
- ¹⁷⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 170.
- ¹⁷⁵ Stam, *Film Theory*, 101.
- ¹⁷⁶ Stam, *Film Theory*, 37.
- ¹⁷⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 297.
- ¹⁷⁸ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 50.
- ¹⁷⁹ Ismail Xavier, "A carne e o espírito: estar inteiro na situação," in *O século de cinema*, by Glauber Rocha (São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2006), 15.
- ¹⁸⁰ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 274.
- ¹⁸¹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 275.
- ¹⁸² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 112.
- ¹⁸³ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 112.
- ¹⁸⁴ See: Ismail Xavier, *Sertão mar: Glauber rocha e a estética da fome* (São Paulo: Cosnac Naify, 2007), 98.
- ¹⁸⁵ Xavier, *Allegories of Underdevelopment*, 62.
- ¹⁸⁶ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 103.
- ¹⁸⁷ Eisenstein, *Film Form*, 104.
- ¹⁸⁸ Sergei Eisenstein, *The Film Sense*, trans. Jay Leda (Orlando, Florida, USA: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1975), 74.

¹⁸⁹ Eisenstein, *Film Sense*, 75.

¹⁹⁰ See Royal S. Brown, "How Not to Think Film Music." *Music and the Moving Image* 1:1 (2008), 2-18, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/musimoviimag.1.1.0002>.

¹⁹¹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 330.

¹⁹² Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 330.

¹⁹³ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 112-113.

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in Abram Tertz [Andrei Sinyavsky], *On Socialist Realism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 148.

¹⁹⁵ Quoted in Tertz, *On Socialist Realism*, 148.

¹⁹⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 104.

¹⁹⁷ F.T. Marinetti, Bruno Corra, Emilio Settimelli, Arnaldo Ginna, Giacomo Balla, Remo Chiti, "The Futurist Cinema," in *Futurist Manifestos*, ed. Umbro Apollonio (Boston: MFA Publications, 2001), 207-208.

¹⁹⁸ F.T. Marinetti et al, "The Futurist Cinema," 208.

¹⁹⁹ F.T. Marinetti et al, "The Futurist Cinema," 208; 217-218.

²⁰⁰ F.T. Marinetti et al, "The Futurist Cinema," 208.

²⁰¹ André Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," trans. R. Seaver and H. R. Lane, in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 729.

²⁰² Stam, *Film Theory*, 56.

²⁰³ Luis Buñuel, quoted in P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary film: the American avant-garde, 1943-2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4.

²⁰⁴ Buñuel, quoted in Sitney, *Visionary film*, 4.

²⁰⁵ Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Avon Books, 1998), 194; 311-312.

²⁰⁶ André Breton, *Mad Love*, trans. Mary Ann Caws (London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 78.

²⁰⁷ Breton, *Mad Love*, 78.

²⁰⁸ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 190.

²⁰⁹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 173.

²¹⁰ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 189.

²¹¹ Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 186.

²¹² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 228.

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- ²¹³ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²¹⁴ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²¹⁵ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 112.
- ²¹⁶ See: Xavier, *Sertão mar*.
- ²¹⁷ See: Xavier, *Sertão mar*.
- ²¹⁸ See: Rocha, *O século de cinema*, 330.
- ²¹⁹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 209-210.
- ²²⁰ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 209-210.
- ²²¹ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²²² Walter Benjamin, *Reflections* (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), 189.
- ²²³ Benjamin, *Reflections*, 189.
- ²²⁴ André Breton, “Manifesto of Surrealism,” trans. R. Seaver and H. R. Lane, in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence S. Rainey (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 727.
- ²²⁵ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 248.
- ²²⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.
- ²²⁷ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.
- ²²⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.
- ²²⁹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.
- ²³⁰ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.
- ²³¹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.
- ²³² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 251.
- ²³³ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 251.
- ²³⁴ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²³⁵ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²³⁶ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²³⁷ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²³⁸ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”
- ²³⁹ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”

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- ²⁴⁰ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁴¹ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁴² Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁴³ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁴⁴ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 167.
- ²⁴⁵ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁴⁶ See: Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 38.
- ²⁴⁷ Quoted in Lúcia Nagib, *Brazil On Screen: Cinema Novo, New Cinema, Utopia* (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2007), 68-69.
- ²⁴⁸ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 127.
- ²⁴⁹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 127.
- ²⁵⁰ See: Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, eds., *Brazilian Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 82.
- ²⁵¹ See: Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, *Macunaíma, da literatura ao cinema* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1978), 120.
- ²⁵² Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, "Cannibalism and Self-Cannibalism," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 82.
- ²⁵³ Andrade, "Cannibalism and Self-Cannibalism," 82-83.
- ²⁵⁴ Andrade, "Cannibalism and Self-Cannibalism," 82-83.
- ²⁵⁵ Andrade, "Cannibalism and Self-Cannibalism," 83.
- ²⁵⁶ Randal Johnson, "Cinema Novo and Cannibalism: *Macunaíma*," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 184.
- ²⁵⁷ Quoted in Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, *Macunaíma, da literatura ao cinema* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1978), http://www.febf.uerj.br/tropicalia/tropicalia_joaquim_pedro.html.
- ²⁵⁸ Rocha, "From the Drought to the Palm Trees," 89.
- ²⁵⁹ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo* 237.
- ²⁶⁰ Rocha, "From the Drought to the Palm Trees," 88.
- ²⁶¹ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁶² Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."

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- ²⁶³ Glauber Rocha. "Cela s'appelle l'aurore: le cinéaste tricontinental," in *Cahiers du cinéma* 195 (1967), 39-41. 1967.
- ²⁶⁴ Ernesto Che Guevara, "Message to the Tricontinental." *Tricontinental* (1967), <http://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1967/04/16.htm>.
- ²⁶⁵ Glauber Rocha, "The Tricontinental Filmmaker: That is Called the Dawn," in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 80.
- ²⁶⁶ Rocha, "The Tricontinental Filmmaker," 80.
- ²⁶⁷ Rocha, "The Tricontinental Filmmaker," 80.
- ²⁶⁸ Rocha, "The Tricontinental Filmmaker," 80.
- ²⁶⁹ Rocha, "The Tricontinental Filmmaker," 80.
- ²⁷⁰ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷¹ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷² Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷³ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷⁴ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷⁵ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷⁶ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 171.
- ²⁷⁷ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷⁸ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁷⁹ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 44; Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁸⁰ Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema."
- ²⁸¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Continuum, 2005), 214.
- ²⁸² Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 172.
- ²⁸³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "What is a Minor Literature?," trans. Robert Brinkley, *Mississippi Review* 11:3(1983), 16, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20133921>.
- ²⁸⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, "Minor Literature?," 16-17.
- ²⁸⁵ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁸⁶ Rocha, "Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram."
- ²⁸⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 211.

²⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 211-212.

²⁸⁹ Rocha, “Tropicalism, anthropophagy, myth, ideogram.”

²⁹⁰ Rocha, *Revolução do cinema novo*, 250.

²⁹¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 209.

²⁹² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 209.

²⁹³ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 53.

²⁹⁴ See: Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (*Problems in General Linguistics*).

²⁹⁵ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 53.

²⁹⁶ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 53.

²⁹⁷ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 53.

²⁹⁸ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 55.

²⁹⁹ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 55.

³⁰⁰ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 56.

CHAPTER 4

NEW CIVILIZATIONS

“But, returned to its milieu of exteriority, the war machine is seen to be of another species, of another nature, of another origin.”

– Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

“But still, thinking from the colonial difference implies thinking from an other place, imagining an other language, arguing from an other logic.”

– Walter Mignolo

“Today, both in Europe and Latin America,” which are both identified and differentiated, “to write means, more and more, to rewrite,” to repeat, or in *other* words, to “re-chew.” “*Oi barbaroi*,” the foreigners with unintelligible speech, and the “logocentric writers,” the *locus* of the Word and/or Reason, “who imagined themselves to be the privileged masters,” in relation to the underdeveloped subalterns, “of a proud one-way *koiné*,” the universal language and/or culture of the metropolis, “must prepare themselves for the increasingly urgent task,” what a new age demanded, “of recognizing and redevouring the differential marrow,” the flesh of flesh, the bone of bone, “of the new barbarians of the polytopic and polyphonic planetary civilization,” which is (dis)located in a New World in the tropics. “Otherness,” the mark of an identity founded on difference, “is, above all,” first and foremost, “a necessary exercise,” both in theory and in practice, “in self-criticism.”

This chapter develops the conception of a cannibal logic as an *other* thinking in relation to post-modern and post-colonial theory and criticism in both literary and cultural studies. It begins by relating cannibal logic to processes of transculturation, as defined and described by Fernando Ortiz and Ángel Rama, and processes of hybridization, as defined and described by Néstor García Canclini and Homi Bhabha. It then relates cannibal logic to a theory of deconstruction, as outlined in the “double science” of Jacques Derrida, and a theory of deterritorialization, as outlined in the “nomad science” of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Finally, it relates cannibal logic to a mode of decolonization, as outlined in the “border thinking” of Walter D. Mignolo. In conclusion, it argues that violence, as conceived by Frantz Fanon, turns a cannibal logic into a more effective strategy for intellectual and cultural decolonization.

The emergence of a new poetry and a new cinema in a New World *under* development, the return by the *other* (neo) avant-garde movements of *concretismo* and *tropicalismo* to an alternative (Brazilian) *modernismo*, signals the re(en)action of (cultural) cannibalism as a theory and practice of critical appropriation and original transformation from an ex-centric (non) *space-in-between* of (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness*. In dialogue with contemporary discourses of post-structuralism and post-colonialism, a post-modernist “anthropophagic reason” would, in the form of a re-cannibalization of a poetics, be related to deconstruction, and in the form of an aesthetics of hunger and/or violence, be related to decolonization. With Europe under the sign of devoration, a revolutionary cannibal logic thereby rules a Latin America under the sign of an *other* thinking via the recreation of new forms of language and/or modes of writing by the new barbarians of a new civilization.

The formulation of a cannibal logic dialogues with *other* theoretical concepts that have attempted to describe the evolution of the art and/or culture(s) of Latin America in relation to Europe, such as *mestizaje*, creolization, transculturation, and hybridization. Although the definitions of such problematic terms tend to overlap, *mestizaje* and creolization may be said to refer to biological and/or racial processes by which the Latin American is *born* of the *intercourse* between the European, the Amerindian and/or the African, while transculturation and hybridization may be said to refer to anthropological and/or sociological processes by which a Latin American culture is *produced* from the *interaction* between European, Amerindian, and/or African cultures. Inasmuch as the development of an “anthropophagic reason” has been effectively characterized by Haroldo de

Campos in terms of both “transculturation” and “hybridization,” such processes thus become fundamental references for the conception of a cannibal logic that also relates to deconstruction and deterritorialization in the form of an *other* thinking, whose aim would be a decolonization of culture.¹

Introduced by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, *transculturation* is a neologism that signifies the process of acculturation, *deculturation*, and *neoculturation* which reflects both the historical and cultural transitions that have marked the New World. In his oft-cited *Contrapunto cubano del tabaco y azúcar* (*Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* – 1940), Ortiz employs “*transculturation*” as a substitute for the problematic term “*acculturation*,” which was being used “to describe the process of transition from one culture to another, and its manifold social repercussions.”² Since acculturation tends to describe a unilateral process of *adoption* without *adaptation*, the word “*transculturation*” is said to be a more “fitting” term to express “the highly varied phenomena” that have arisen in Cuba and/or Latin America which are a consequence of “extremely complex transmutations of culture.”³ For Ortiz, it was not possible to comprehend the “evolution” of Cuban and/or Latin American culture, including its artistic and linguistic aspects, without a “knowledge” of such processes of *transculturation*, which involve reciprocal relations *between* cultures that ultimately create “new cultural phenomena.”⁴ As Ortiz reiterates:

I am of the opinion that the word *transculturation* better expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word *acculturation* really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as a *deculturation*. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called *neoculturation*. In the end [...] the result of every union of cultures is similar to that of the reproductive process between individuals: the offspring always has something of both parents but is always different from each of them.⁵

As a form of *procreation*, transculturation is hereby described as a *reproduction* of culture in which an identity is prescribed and/or subscribed by *difference*. Inasmuch as the history of the New World can be re-read and/or re-written as “an intense, complex, unbroken process of transculturation of human groups, all in a state of transition,” as Ortiz concludes, the concept of *transculturation* therefore becomes both “fundamental” and “indispensable” for a comprehension of the history of Latin America.⁶

The conception of transculturation was received with “instant approbation,” according to Ortiz, by important anthropologists such as Bronislaw Malinowski, who would describe transculturation as “un proceso en el cual ambas partes de la ecuación resultan modificadas. Un proceso en el cual emerge una nueva realidad, compuesta y compleja; una realidad que no es una aglomeración mecánica de caracteres, ni siquiera un mosaico, sino un fenómeno nuevo, original y independiente.”⁷ The process of transculturation consequently produces “new” and/or “original” manifestations of culture that also represent relatively “independent” phenomena, at least in principle. According to Uruguayan critic Ángel Rama, such a conception of cultural *transformation* transmits a Latin American perspective that resists considering an otherwise colonized culture to be “passive” or “inferior” and instead asserts the “creative energy” and “originality” of a “transcultured” Latin America in constant “evolution” or development.⁸ In his *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina* (*Writing across Cultures: Narrative Transculturation in Latin America* – 1982), Rama would extend the anthropological and/or sociological concept of transculturation, which already considered the evolution of art and language, to the development of a Latin American literature:

Cuando se aplica a las obras literarias la descripción de la transculturación hecha por Fernando Ortiz, se llega a algunas obligadas correcciones. Su visión es geométrica, según tres momentos. Implica en primer término una

“parcial desculturación” que puede alcanzar diversos grados y afectar variadas zonas tanto de la cultura como del ejercicio literario, aunque acarreado siempre pérdida de componentes considerados obsoletos. En segundo término implica incorporaciones procedentes de la cultura externa y en tercero un esfuerzo de recomposición manejando los elementos supervivientes de la cultura originaria y los que vienen de fuera. Este diseño no atiende suficientemente a los criterios de selectividad y a los de invención, que deben ser obligadamente postulados en todos los casos de “plasticidad cultural”, dado que ese estado certifica la energía y la creatividad de una comunidad cultural. Si ésta es viviente, cumplirá esta selectividad, sobre sí misma e sobre el aporte exterior, y, obligadamente, efectuará invenciones con un “ars combinatorio” adecuado a la autonomía del propio sistema cultural.⁹

Although Rama acknowledges both the value and the validity of transculturation as a descriptive term, he nonetheless perceives the need for “corrections,” inasmuch as the tripartite process of deculturation, acculturation, and neoculturation does not comprehend the “criteria” of “selectivity” and “invention” of a culture that produces literary texts by means of an “ars combinatorio” of internal (native) and external (foreign) elements. In the context of another, different Latin American (anti)tradition evoked in “counterpoint” to a European tradition, a “combinatory” multiculturalism and a “transmutation of meaning and values” would also characterize the *antropofagia* of Brazilian *modernismo*, *concretismo*, and *tropicalismo*, which was both *selective* and *inventive* in its critical appropriation(s) and original transformation(s) of a “universal cultural heritage.”¹⁰ Such a theory and practice of (cultural) cannibalism would, as such, represent a form of transculturation in its own *rite*.

In a sense, the emblematic figure of the cannibal as an *other* itself represents the *transmutation* of an Amerindian reality into a European fantasy and, in turn, into a Latin American mythology. The trope of cannibalism as a counter-discourse of *difference* and/or *otherness* likewise represents a transvaluation of the history of modernity in the context and/or subtext of coloniality. In her insightful commentary of the “genealogy” of (cultural) cannibalism, critic Sara Castro-Klarén reconsiders *antropofagia* as an “advanced version” of

transculturation, as posed in the essays by Haroldo de Campos and Benedito Nunes. Invoking Michel Foucault, Castro-Klarén asserts that a “genealogical reading” of Oswald de Andrade’s “Manifesto Antropófago” would allow for a re-evaluation of the “rewritings” of the “cannibal trope” in Brazilian *modernismo* and afterwards.¹¹ Such a re-reading would also provide “a vantage point from which to examine the gaps created by the aphoristic structure” of the manifesto, in addition to allowing for “the possibility of a transvaluation, for the gap between each aphorism marks the borderline of the trench that it digs before the next piece of text can arise.”¹² Castro-Klarén’s re-reading of the foundation of the discourse of (cultural) cannibalism thereby repeats Foucault’s argument for a “return to the origin.”¹³ Just as Foucault advocates “a return to a text in itself,” especially to “those things registered in the interstices of the text, its gaps and absences,” Castro-Klarén’s re-reads the fragmentary text of the manifesto in order to reveal that the “silence” produced by such “gaps” dis-locates meaning in a “no-place” *in between* and represents “absence” as “disparity” rather than “coherence.”¹⁴ In relation to transculturation, (cultural) cannibalism is defined and/or described by Castro-Klarén as a process of “assimilation” and “transformation” by which a “colonial” and/or “subaltern” culture becomes an “aggressive and conquering agent,” an active subject rather than a passive object:

Anthropophagy, understood literally, generates the idea of assimilation of differences by means of the ingestion and digestion of the “other” by the subject. As such it enabled Brazil to devour all cultural materials coming from outside [...] In the act of devouring, the colonial or subaltern culture changes from a passive entity into an aggressive and conquering agent unexpectedly capable of transformations that affect both self and other.¹⁵

Despite the interrelations involved in anthropophagy, in which both “self” and “other” are transformed, the logic of (cultural) cannibalism is said to *transgress* the concept of transculturation due to “the implications of the aggressive gesture implicit in the adoption of

the cannibal metaphor,” which is therefore ultimately “outside the conciliatory and mutual appropriation dynamics of transculturation.”¹⁶ There is, indeed, no possibility for the reconciliation of *difference* and/or *otherness* in the savage “law of the anthropophagus” and its barbaric “codification of vengeance,” as the manifesto declares.¹⁷ In the formulation of an “anthropophagic reason,” as Campos observes, there is, instead, a “need” to re-consider the national and/or local tradition in both a “dialogical” and a “dialectic” relationship with an international and/or universal tradition.¹⁸ The dialectical relations between Latin American and European cultures, which involve a series of oppositions and contrasts, are further accentuated in Nunes’ description of *antropofagia* as a concept and/or term that functions as an “engenho verbal ofensivo, instrumento de agressão pessoal e arma bélica de teor explosivo, que distende, quando manejada, as molas tensas das oposições e contrastes éticos, sociais, religiosos e políticos, que se acham nela comprimidos.”¹⁹ Such a *barbaric* theory and practice of an otherwise *savage* (cultural) cannibalism thus “exceeds the limits of transculturation,” as Castro-Klarén concludes.²⁰

The formulation of a cannibal logic in Brazil is expressly related not only to processes of transculturation but also to processes of hybridization, a concept that has been redefined in order to describe the development of Latin American art and/or culture. In effect, theories of transculturation, which arose within the discourse(s) of a nationalist and/or modernist paradigm, have been succeeded by theories of hybridization, which arose within the discourse(s) of a trans-nationalist and post-modernist paradigm.²¹ In the introduction to his influential work *Culturas híbridas. Estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad* (*Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Exiting Modernity* – 1990), the Argentine anthropologist Néstor García Canclini defines *hybridization* as “sociocultural processes in

which discrete structures or practices, previously existing in separate form, are combined to generate new structures, objects, and practices."²² As in transculturation, the process of hybridization thereby involves the production of "new structures" from a *combination* of primarily "discrete structures." Canclini furthermore notes, however, that such "discrete structures" are actually "the result of prior hybridizations and therefore cannot be considered pure points of origin."²³ A perpetual cycle that relativizes identity as such, hybridization is finally akin to a "cross-cultural heterogeneity" that opposes notions of hegemonic cultural homogeneity.²⁴

In order to supersede "fundamentalist identitarian tropes," Canclini argues, hybridization must be placed within a "network" of interrelated concepts that include "contradiction, *mestizaje*, syncretism, transculturation, and creolization."²⁵ Such terms would effectively be subsumed by the arguably more appropriate concept(s) of hybridization and/or hybridity. According to Canclini, the term *mestizaje* has both a "biological" sense, which refers to the "mix of Spanish and Portuguese colonizers, then English and French, with indigenous Americans, to which were added slaves transported from Africa," and a "cultural" sense, which refers to the "mixing of European habits, beliefs, and forms of thought with those originating from American societies."²⁶ Due to the colonial provenance of the concept, *mestizaje* is nonetheless deemed inadequate for defining and/or describing the forms of "cross-cultural contact" that describe a "modern" Latin America. Meanwhile, *syncretism* refers to both "the combination of traditional religious practices" and "the simultaneous adherence to different systems of belief, not only of a religious kind."²⁷ Finally, the term *creolization* also refers to "cross-cultural mixes" but specifically "designates the language and culture created by variations from the base language and other languages in the context

of slave trafficking.”²⁸ In the end, all such terms are all ultimately said to “designate” processes of *hybridization*. As Canclini explains:

I prefer this last term [*hybridization*] because it includes diverse intercultural mixtures – not only the racial ones to which *mestizaje* tends to be limited – and because it permits the inclusion of the modern forms of hybridization better than does “syncretism,” a term that almost always refers to religious fusions or traditional symbolic movements.²⁹

Although the terms *mestizaje*, *syncretism*, and *creolization* all appear to “specify” processes of *hybridization*, this last term therefore “seems more ductile for the purpose of naming not only the mixing of ethnic or religious elements but the products of advanced technologies and modern or postmodern social processes,” according to Canclini.³⁰ The term *transculturation*, however, is not discussed in any detail despite the fact that, as observed by critic Renato Rosaldo in the foreword to *Hybrid Cultures*, “hybridity can be understood as the ongoing condition of all human cultures, which contain no zones of purity because they undergo continuous processes of transculturation (two-way borrowing and lending between cultures).”³¹ Such an oversight may arguably indicate that *transculturation* and *hybridization* represent analogous processes, though the terms refer to distinct conceptions of cultural interaction(s).

The concept of hybridization emerges *in between* the rearticulations of tradition and modernity (and postmodernity) in Latin America, where (“cultural”) modernism must be compared to, and contrasted with, (“social”) modernization. Accordingly, Canclini distinguishes between “*modernity* as historical stage, *modernization* as socioeconomic process that tries to construct modernity, and *modernisms*, or the cultural projects that renew symbolic practices with an experimental or critical sense.”³² After establishing such important distinctions, Canclini thereby wishes to re-think current “debates” in

anthropological, sociological, and/or cultural studies, such as the “thesis” that Latin America is either *pre*-modern for presenting a “defective version of the modernity canonized by the metropolis,” or *post*-modern for representing “the land of pastiche and bricolage, where many periods and aesthetics are cited.”³³ As Canclini concludes:

Neither the “paradigm” of imitation, nor that of originality, nor the “theory” that attributes everything to dependency, nor the one that lazily wants to explain us by the “marvelously real” or a Latin American surrealism, are able to account for our hybrid cultures.³⁴

In spite of contemporary preconceptions and/or misconceptions, such “hybrid cultures” are ultimately the consequence of an *other* logic, and Latin America must therefore be conceived as “a more complex articulation of traditions and modernities (diverse and unequal), a heterogeneous continent consisting of countries in each of which coexist multiple logics of development.”³⁵ Both traditional and modern, the cannibal logic of the Brazilian avant-garde movement of *modernismo*, and also the (neo)vanguard movements of *concretismo* and *tropicalismo*, exemplifies such a “complex” rearticulation of a New World *under* “development.”

The contradictory nature of Latin American culture(s) in modernity is explored by Canclini in an essay aptly titled “Latin American Contradictions: Modernism without Modernization?” The consensus, a position already established by Octavio Paz, was that Latin America had exhibited both an “exuberant modernism” and a “deficient modernization,” by Canclini’s account.³⁶ The development of artistic and/or cultural modernism is thus contrasted with the underdevelopment of economic and/or social modernization. Such disparities between modernism and modernization would become a fundamental problem for the Latin American avant-garde, which emerged *in between* the multiple contradictions of an *alternative* modernity. Canclini thereby inquires how such

movements and/or artists could “represent, in another way – in the double sense of converting reality into images and being representative of reality – heterogeneous societies with cultural traditions that coexist and contradict each other all the time.”³⁷ Rather than subscribe to a Eurocentric discourse of art history, which presupposes that the innovations of the Latin American avant-garde resulted from imitations of its European counterpart, Canclini proposes a de-centered and/or ex-centric re-vision of both modernization and modernity that questions the “dependency” and/or “backwardness” of a Latin America *under* development.³⁸ Any explanation of “the disparities between cultural modernism and social modernization” only in terms of (external) dependency, according to Canclini, neglects to address the “preoccupations” of artistic movements with the (internal) “conflicts” of Latin American culture and/or society.³⁹ Works of art and/or literature are thereby said to respond to a “triple conditioning,” in the forms of “internal conflicts, external dependency, and transforming utopias,” that would characterize the modernist and/or avant-garde movements of Latin America.⁴⁰ As Canclini observes:

The first phase of Latin American modernism was promoted by artists and writers who were returning to their countries after a period of time in Europe. It was not so much the direct – transplanted – influence of the European vanguards that gave rise to the modernizing vein in the visual arts on the continent, but rather the questions of the Latin Americans themselves about how to make their international experience compatible with the tasks presented to them by developing societies.⁴¹

As a consequence of multiple *contradictions*, a Latin American modernism thus emerges from a hybrid *space-in-between* the imitation and the original, the traditional and the modern, the native and the cosmopolitan, the national and the international, the Latin American and the European.

The cultural heterogeneity of Latin America is further accentuated by differences in identity between the nations of former Spanish and Portuguese colonies, where the development(s) of modernity, modernization, and/or modernism would take place. Despite the correspondence(s) between *creacionismo* in Chile, *ultraísmo* in Argentina, *estridentismo* in Mexico, and *modernismo* in Brazil, each avant-garde movement responds to particular historical and social realities. Referring to the Week of Modern Art (1922), Canclini observes how “the modern is joined with the interest in knowing and defining the Brazilian.”⁴² Instead of influence, a “confluence” of cosmopolitanism and nativism, internationalism and nationalism, is evident in the work(s) of writers such as Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade, and artists such as Anita Malfatti, Di Cavalcanti, and Tarsila de Amaral, whose “constructivist aesthetic” is particularly said to exhibit “a color and atmosphere representative of Brazil.”⁴³ Throughout Latin America, the “rise of cultural modernization,” according to Canclini, is not a question of the *transplantation* of European modernism and/or modernity on the part of the “main artists and writers,” but rather of the “reelaborations” of international information in order to realize a national *transformation*.⁴⁴ As such, Latin American artists and/or writers who subscribe to the models of European movements “are not mere imitators of imported aesthetics; nor can they be accused of denationalizing their own culture.”⁴⁵ In fact, the contrary often appears to be the case, especially in Brazil, as Canclini duly observes:

In several cases, cultural modernism, instead of denationalizing, has given impulse to, and the repertory of symbols for, the construction of national identity. The most intense preoccupation of “Brazilianness” begins with the vanguards of the 1920s.⁴⁶

Indeed, the various manifestos and/or manifestations of Brazilian *modernismo* would actually produce a diverse “repertory” of nationalist symbols such as *pau-brasil* (“brazilwood”),

verde-amarelo (“green-yellow”), the *antropófago* (“anthropophagite”), and the *anta* (“tapir”), all of which sought to represent a *hybrid* Brazilian identity.

The “aesthetic proclamations” of the Brazilian “cannibals” are elsewhere cited by Canclini as an example of “utopian” vanguard theories and practices which anteceded processes of “decollecting” and “deterritorialization” that are related to hybridization.⁴⁷ If “decollecting” refers to the reorganization of “*collections* of symbolic goods” such as “high art” and “folklore,” “deterritorialization” refers to “the loss of the ‘natural’ relation of culture to geographical and social territories.”⁴⁸ Such a process furthermore involves the “transnationalization of symbolic markets” and “multidirectional migrations.”⁴⁹ As an example of “decollecting,” the Tropicalist musician Caetano Veloso is said to “appropriate at once the experimentation of the concrete poets, Afro-Brazilian traditions, and post-Webernian musical experimentation.”⁵⁰ Such an appropriation therefore represents a de-hierarchical combination of vanguard and popular, modern and traditional (re)sources in a hybrid work of art. As an example of “deterritorialization,” a number of “border” artists and/or writers, such as the Mexican Guillermo Gómez-Peña, not only “add their own intercultural laboratory” to hybrid products, but also rework “the definitions of identity and culture by taking the border experience as a starting point,” an experience characterized by the “interval” of a *space-in-between* that is marked by “contradictions” and “uprooting.”⁵¹ Inasmuch as Oswald de Andrade declares in the “Anthropophagous Manifesto” that “I am only interested in what is not mine,” *antropofagia* or (cultural) cannibalism also represents, for Canclini, a sort of “decollecting” and “deterritorialization” by a hybrid culture that “never had grammars or collections of old plants,” and that “never knew what was urban, suburban, frontier and continental,” once dis-located on the “world map” of Brazil.⁵² Elsewhere the

manifesto even refers to “migrations” and the “escape from boring states.”⁵³ As a consequence of the contradictions between cosmopolitanism and nativism, the artists and/or writers of a Latin American avant-garde thus become dis-placed within a New World *order without borders* that is defined by an *international* and/or *cross-cultural* experience which, in turn, describes a national and/or cultural experience of hybridity. As Canclini finally observes:

It is known how many works of Latin American art and literature, valued as paradigmatic interpretations of our identity, were produced outside of the continent, or at least outside of their author’s countries of birth – from Sarmiento, Alfonso Reyes, and Oswald de Andrade to Cortázar, Botero, and Glauber Rocha. The place from which [...] Latin American artists write, paint, or compose music is no longer the city in which they spent their infancy, nor the one they have lived in for several years, but rather a hybrid place in which the places really lived are crossed.⁵⁴

In terms of hybridization, the (cultural) cannibalism performed by significant figures such as Oswald de Andrade and Glauber Rocha produces innovative and “paradigmatic” interpretations of a hybrid cultural identity from the multiple and diverse relations between the traditional and the modern, the avant-garde and the popular, the cosmopolitan and the native, the Latin American and the European. Such a cannibal logic is not the *product* of a hybrid culture *per se*, but is rather a mode of *production* that both originates and culminates in hybridity. Canclini himself has insisted that “the object of study is not hybridity, but the processes of hybridization.” Such a concept nonetheless exhibits certain limitations, and Canclini admits that “a theory of hybridization that is not naïve requires a critical awareness of its limits, of what refuses or resists hybridization.”⁵⁵ Canclini’s own conception of hybridity, which has arisen in the context of Latin American studies, might therefore be read in relation to contemporary discourses of hybridity, which have emerged in the context of Post-Colonial studies, in order to delimit the limits of hybridization in relation to (cultural)

cannibalism. Such a re-reading would ultimately illustrate the (non) place of an *alternative* cannibal logic as a counter-discourse of *difference* and/or *otherness* in relation to modernity and/or coloniality.

A leading theorist of cultural hybridity is the critic Homi Bhabha, who transits *in between* post-modern and post-colonial discourse(s). Exploring the question(s) of language and/or writing from an *other*, subaltern dis-location, Bhabha “has studied hybridizations as involving the processes of domination and of resistance,” according to Canclini.⁵⁶ Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1994) both defines and describes hybridity not in terms of location but as a *locus* of enunciation, a (non) place or “Third Space” from where culture re-articulates and/or re-inscribes *itself* as *another*. Hybridization is thus reconceived in relation to the *signs* of culture, and reformulated as a question of “ambivalence” and “authority.” In “Signs Taken for Wonders” (1984), Bhabha argues that “the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference.”⁵⁷ Inasmuch as the “exercise” of (colonialist) authority requires the “production” of “differentiations,” “individuations,” and related “modes of discriminatory effects,” a theory of hybridization must not only be based on a presupposed “radical” *difference* in relation to identity, but also founded on a proposed *repetition* in relation to originality.⁵⁸ The effects of the “discourse of cultural colonialism,” as Bhabha observes, do not “refer” to “a dialectical power struggle between self and other,” or to a “discrimination between mother culture and alien cultures,” but rather to “a process of splitting as the condition of subjection.”⁵⁹ Such a process is said to involve “a discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something *different* – a mutation, a hybrid.”⁶⁰ As a form of

difference via repetition, the hybrid is thus described by Bhabha as a “mutation” that is marked by a transformation from symbol (of authority) to sign (of ambivalence), while hybridity as such is defined as both an *effect* of coercive strategies of domination and a *cause* of subversive strategies of resistance:

Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the ‘pure’ and original identity of authority). Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power.⁶¹

If the hybrid is a form that is “produced,” and hybridity is a “sign” of “productivity,” then hybridization is ultimately a mode of production. Inasmuch as the effect of “colonial power” is the “*production* of hybridization,” according to Bhabha, the fundamental “ambivalence” of “authority” is thereby said to enable “a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention.”⁶²

There is a certain “uncertainty” of ambivalence which would turn the “symbol” of authority (as originality) into the “sign” of difference (as repetition), according to Bhabha, who designates hybridity as the “name of this displacement of value from symbol to sign.”⁶³ But hybridity, as such, cannot be conceived as “a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures” in a dialectics of identity and difference, self and other, since “the displacement from symbol to sign creates a crisis for any concept of authority.”⁶⁴ Rather than a “mirror” in which the self *recognizes* itself *in* another, there is a “split screen” by which the self *repeats* itself *as* another: “the hybrid.”⁶⁵ Hybridity is therefore not “a *problem* of genealogy or identity between two *different* cultures,” as Bhabha observes, but “a problematic of colonial

representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other ‘denied’ knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority – its rules of recognition.”⁶⁶ It is furthermore not only the *content* of “denied” or “disavowed” knowledges that are “acknowledged” or recognized as “counter-authorities,” but also the *form* of “disavowal” that is estranged or reversed in the “presence” of the hybrid, or in “the revaluation of the symbol of national authority as the sign of colonial difference.”⁶⁷

As Bhabha asserts:

Hybridity reverses the *formal* process of disavowal so that the violent dislocation of the act of colonization becomes the conditionality of colonial discourse. The presence of colonialist authority is no longer immediately visible; its discriminatory identifications no longer have their authoritative reference to this culture’s cannibalism or that people’s perfidy. As an articulation of displacement and dislocation, it is now possible to identify ‘the cultural’ as a disposal of power [...] It is crucial to remember that the colonial construction of the cultural (the site of the civilizing mission) through the process of disavowal is authoritative to the extent to which it is structured around the ambivalence of splitting, denial, repetition - strategies of defence that mobilize culture as an open-textured, warlike strategy [...]

⁶⁸

In terms of a “violent dislocation” that produces “hybridity” as such, if the “act of colonization” becomes “the conditionality of colonial discourse,” a reaction of decolonization might in turn become the condition of an anti-colonial discourse. The “presence” of “colonialist” ambivalence would still be apparent; hybridity would have an ambivalent “reference” to a culture’s “cannibalism.” As a re-articulation of “displacement and dislocation,” it would then become possible to *differentiate* “the cultural” as a proposal of resistance. Finally, it would be vital not to forget that a post-colonial deconstruction of “the cultural” (the “site” of a *barbarizing* “mission”) through a reversal of the process of “disavowal” would be de-authoritative to the extent to which it is restructured around “the

ambivalence of splitting, denial, repetition” – strategies of offense that “mobilize” a counterculture as an “open-textured, warlike strategy.”

In relation to hybridization, the *cannibalization* of both the figure of the cannibal and the trope of cannibalism by a Latin American avant-garde movement would ultimately represent a *mimicry*, and not a *mimēsis*, of the modernist primitivism of the European avant-garde. The aforementioned “cannibal metaphor,” as a “hybrid object,” would as such retain “the actual semblance of the authoritative symbol,” in Bhabha’s words, but revalue its “presence” by “resisting” it as the “signifier” of a distortion and/or displacement – “*after the intervention of difference*.”⁶⁹ In the presence of such an *absence*, Bhabha might add, “knowledges of cultural authority,” such as European modernism, may be articulated with “forms of ‘native’ knowledges,” such as Amerindian cannibalism, in a process that is neither “the deconstruction of a cultural system from the margins,” nor “the mime that haunts mimesis,” as discussed in Jacques Derrida’s *double séance* (“double session”).⁷⁰ Instead, the “display of hybridity – its peculiar ‘replication’ – terrorizes authority with the *ruse* of recognition, its mimicry, its mockery.”⁷¹ For Bhabha, “*mimicry*” is ultimately described as the “affect” of hybridity, “at once a mode of appropriation and resistance.”⁷² Furthermore, as (colonial) discourse, the “masque of mimicry” both reveals and conceals an “agonistic” space where “the words of the master become the site of hybridity – the warlike, subaltern sign of the native.”⁷³ In the “Cannibal Manifesto,” such a mimicry is evident in its mockery of the oft (re)cited line from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “Tupi, or not Tupi that is the question.” As a form of critical appropriation and original transformation, (cultural) cannibalism thus becomes a process of hybridization that turns the symbols of domination into the signs of resistance. The hybrid cannibal *dis-plays* its ambivalent role as both primitive and modern,

barbarian and civilized, in order to rewrite its own part *anew*. The emergence of a new poetry and/or a new cinema in Latin America by an *other* (neo) avant-garde would, as such, mimic both the historical and the contemporary developments of new art(s) in Europe by innovative artists and/or movements.

The “cultural” hybridity represented by (cultural) cannibalism might, in an *other* sense, actually represent a form of “savage” hybridity, as elaborated by critic Alberto Moreiras in dialogue with Bhabha, inasmuch as the development of an identitarian, nationalist *antropofagia* in its temporal historicity may be distinguished from the form(ul)ation of a differential, universalist cannibal logic as a perpetual possibility.⁷⁴ In *The Exhaustion of Difference* (2001), Moreiras argues that such a “savage hybridity” is “not what grounds a subject in an antagonistic relation” to discourses of “domination,” but rather “what ungrounds it, or the very principle of ungrounding.”⁷⁵ A “savage” hybridity would thereby be “excluded” from “cultural” hybridity since it is not only “beyond all difference and all identity,” but is also “the condition of (im)possibility of both,” inasmuch as “it marks the site of an abyssal exclusion, beyond any principle of reason, and it marks the (im)possible locus of enunciation of the subaltern perspective, beyond the subject.”⁷⁶ As Moreiras concludes, a “savage” *otherness* paradoxically negates and affirms “cultural” *difference*:

What constitutes the system of differences is what negates the system of differences. And what negates the system of differences is undecidably other. Savage hybridity, as expression of the radical finitude of all particularism, is that beyond. Savage hybridity is *not*, to be sure, the subaltern. But, as the “other side” of the hegemonic relationship, savage hybridity preserves, or holds in reserve, the site of the subaltern [...] It is not so much a locus of enunciation as it is an atopic site, not a place for ontologies but a place for the destabilization of all ontologies, for a critique of totality – and a place for the possibility of an *other* history.⁷⁷

An *other* history of the Americas would, as such, illustrate both the “constitution” and the “negation” of a “system of differences” in the emblematic figure of the barbarous cannibal in relation to the “noble savage.” In terms of *antropofagia*, Haroldo de Campos observes that the perspective of the “bad savage,” or cannibal, involves “a critical view of History as a negative function,” and declares that “any past which is an ‘other’ for us deserves to be negated. We could say that it deserves to be eaten, devoured.”⁷⁸ An “anthropophagic reason” would thereby delimit the limits of the *raison d'être* of a Eurocentric history in the name of an *other* history from the borders of a New World. Inasmuch as “cultural” hybridity, according to Moreiras, describes the “crossing-over of borders and the (relative) erasure of limits,” a “savage” hybridity, as a “counter-limit,” ultimately describes “the ne-plus-ultra of any limit, and thus the limit of limit, and an impossible possibility.”⁷⁹ In the end, the exhaustive *difference* of a “savage” (cultural) cannibalism, which as an “impossible possibility” of *otherness* may or may not exceed the “limits” of hybridity, would relate a process of hybridization to a procedure of deconstruction.⁸⁰

In terms of transculturation and/or hybridization, a cannibal logic not only relates to the discourses of Post-Colonial studies in Latin America and/or the Third World but also dialogues with the discourses of Post-Modern studies in Europe and the Americas, which emerged under the (double) mark of *deconstruction*. Bhabha's discussion of cultural hybridity in "Signs Taken for Wonders," for instance, refers to Derrida's *La double séance* (*The Double Session* – 1970) in order to describe the "différance" of an always already ambivalent "colonial presence," in which "the colonial text occupies that space of double inscription, hallowed - no, hollowed - by Jacques Derrida."⁸¹ In a striking discussion of *mimēsis*, Derrida writes of the process of displacement that occurs "whenever any writing both marks and goes back over its mark with an undecidable stroke."⁸²

This double mark escapes the pertinence or authority of truth: it does not overturn it but rather inscribes it within its play as one of its functions or parts. This displacement does not take place, has not taken place once as an event. It does not occupy a simple place. It does not take place in writing. This dislocation (is what) writes/is written.⁸³

As a form of "play" re-enacted from a (non) *space-in-between*, such a "redoubling of the mark" is not only "*exemplified*" by Mallarmé's *Mimique*, as Derrida concludes, but also by the mimicry of *poesia concreta* and *antropofagia* as reformulated by Haroldo de Campos, who has described "anthropophagic reason" as a form and/or mode of deconstruction. In "Da razão antropofágica," originally published with the subtitle "a Europa sob o signo da devoração" ("Europe under the sign of devoration"), and subsequently republished with the subtitle "diálogo e diferença na cultura brasileira" ("dialogue and difference in Brazilian culture"), Campos refers to "the Platonizing logocentrism which Derrida, in *Of*

Grammatology, subjected to a lucid and revealing analysis.”⁸⁴ The reference would serve to criticize the “logocentric fallacy” of an “ontological nationalism,” a tradition that (pro)poses an “origin” as a “point” of departure for a “Western metaphysics of presence” transferred to the tropics.⁸⁵ From the ex-centric, dis-position of an *anti*-logocentric logic, Campos argues for the necessity of re-thinking “the *difference*, nationalism as a dialogic movement of difference (and not as the Platonic unction of the origin and the homogenizing leveler of the same).”⁸⁶ Campos thereby aims to de-construct a “modal, differential nationalism” that, in effect, “de-fers (in the Derridean double meaning of divergence and delay) the talismanic moment of monological plentitude” which describes the influence of a universal *logos* or reason.⁸⁷

The formulation of a cannibal logic, as a form of deconstruction, would necessitate a rejection of the notion of a “gradual, harmonious natural evolution,” such as that written by the discourse of history, and an affirmation of a “new idea of tradition (anti-tradition) to be made operative as a counter-revolution, as a countercurrent opposed to the glorious, prestigious canon.”⁸⁸ Such an *anti*-tradition, founded on *difference*, would embody the “dialogical movement of the same and otherness, of what is native and what is foreign (European),” in a process of (cultural) cannibalism that originates in the Baroque and culminates in the (neo) avant-garde and/or neo-baroque manifestations of Latin American art and culture.⁸⁹ Henceforth, an anthropophagic “reason” (or “rule” of anthropophagy), according to Campos, “deconstructs the logocentrism inherited from the West,” the (colonial) presence of Eurocentrism.⁹⁰ Such a *deconstructive* logic, “differential within the universal,” is said to begin with the “distortions and contortions of a discourse,” the trans-formation an “anti-tradition” that “passes through the gaps” of history, “filters through its breaks,” and

“edges through its fissures.”⁹¹ Ultimately, like the *double séance* of deconstruction, *antropofagia* represents an *other* thinking or “mode of thought, skillfully projected over the first chronographic trace,” which would thereby outline a new “space,” in which “history” itself becomes “the product of a construction” and/or “appropriation.”⁹²

By re-thinking and/or re-writing the *difference*, a cannibal logic corresponds to the “double science” of deconstruction, both in theory and in practice. The relations between the theories of (cultural) cannibalism and post-structuralism might therefore be explored via the practice of *bricolage*, which would become an innovative technique in the modernist primitivism of both the European and the Latin American avant-garde. In order to dis-locate the decentering of both logocentrism and Eurocentrism, Derrida assigns a critical position to *bricolage* in his re-reading of important works by the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, such as *La Pensée sauvage* (*The Savage Mind* – 1962) and *Le Cru et le cuit* (*The Raw and the Cooked* – 1964). In *The Savage Mind*, Lévi-Strauss defines *bricolage* as both a technical and intellectual “activity” that characterizes a “prior,” rather than “primitive,” *science* in relation to modern scientific “knowledge.”⁹³ Although Lévi-Strauss considers “the mythopoetical nature” of *bricolage* in terms of “so-called ‘raw’ or ‘naïve’ art,” his reflections would likewise apply to the modernist primitivism of avant-garde art, which exhibits analogous techniques.⁹⁴ The artist as *bricoleur*, according to Lévi-Strauss, is “adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks” which are not subordinated to “the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project.”⁹⁵

Furthermore:

His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with “whatever is at hand,” that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular

project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions.⁹⁶

Whether as primitive practice or as modernist technique, the activity of *bricolage* is therefore a form of appropriation that involves the (dis)play of a variety of (re)sources. With a “retrospective” perspective, the *bricoleur* must re-turn to an already “existent set” of “materials” in order to re-consider what the set “contains,” and finally, “to engage in a sort of dialogue” with the set in order to make an *appropriate* selection.⁹⁷ By re-utilizing “heterogeneous objects” and re-discovering the multiple possibilities of *signification*, the *bricoleur* thus re-defines a *new* and/or *other* set “which has yet to materialize but which will ultimately differ from the instrumental set only in the internal disposition of its parts.”⁹⁸ As a “mytho-poetical” activity that represents difference as repetition, *bricolage* is therefore a technique akin to *antropofagia*, a theory and practice of critical appropriation and original transformation that would, as such, be related to deconstruction.

If, for Lévi-Strauss, the “choice” of the *bricoleur* involves “a complete reorganization of the structure,” then, for Derrida, the discourse of the method of *bricolage* deconstructs structure just as ethnology decenters ethnocentrism.⁹⁹ As such, a critique of the human sciences would correspond to a critique of both logocentrism and Eurocentrism. According to Derrida, there is “a critique of language in the form of *bricolage*, and it has even been possible to say that *bricolage* is the critical language itself.”¹⁰⁰ As a mode of “criticism,” *bricolage* furthermore becomes a form of “discourse,” and *vice versa*, inasmuch as it designates “the necessity of borrowing one’s concepts from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined.”¹⁰¹ For Derrida, then, each and every discourse is always already “*bricoleur*.”¹⁰² Ultimately, the “mythopoetical virtue” of *bricolage*, which is

described as a “critical search for a new status of the discourse,” would be “the stated abandonment of all reference to a *center*, to a *subject*, to a privileged *reference*, to an *origin*, or to an absolute *archia*.”¹⁰³ Such a “decentering,” as Derrida observes, is not only a “theme” in Lévi-Strauss’ *The Savage Mind*, which opposes the engineer and the *bricoleur*, and *The Raw and the Cooked*, which opposes “*epistemic* discourse” and “*mythological* discourse,” but is also the topic of Derrida’s own writings from *Writing and Difference*, which alongside *Of Grammatology* opposes *logos* (speech) and *gramma* (writing) in order to outline the *double writing* of a deconstruction based on *differance*.¹⁰⁴

The discussion of the technique of *bricolage* as a form of “critical language” and/or “discourse” in the essay “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences” opens with the question of an “event” in “the history of the concept of structure” which would appear in the form of a “*rupture*” and a “redoubling.”¹⁰⁵ Such a momentous “event” would have occurred when the “structurality of structure” was “thought,” and therefore, “repeated.”¹⁰⁶ As Derrida observes:

Henceforth, it was necessary to begin thinking that there was no center, that the center could not be thought in the form of a present-being, that the center had no natural site, that it was not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of nonlocus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play. This was the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a center or origin, everything became discourse [...] that is to say, a system in which the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences. The absence of the transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of signification indefinitely.¹⁰⁷

After (pro)posing the problem in terms of a language and/or discourse marked by “differences,” Derrida proceeds to ask both “where” and “how” such a “decentering,” or “thinking the structurality of structure,” *takes place*.¹⁰⁸ Not so (co)incidentally, the post-structuralist thinker dis-locates a deconstruction of structuralism in the “privileged place” of

ethnology, a “human science” that could only have arisen at the moment of a “decentering,” or “at the moment when European culture [...] had been *dislocated*, driven from its locus, and forced to stop considering itself as the culture of reference.”¹⁰⁹ Such a “moment” is furthermore not only “a moment of philosophical or scientific discourse,” but also a moment that is “political, economic, technical, and so forth.”¹¹⁰ In art and literature, the moment would arguably involve the movement(s) of an avant-garde, whose primitivism represented the *other* side of modernism. As a science that *critiques* science, ethnology ultimately becomes, for Derrida, “a question of explicitly and systematically posing the problem of the status of a discourse which borrows from a heritage the resources necessary for the deconstruction of that heritage itself.”¹¹¹ By analogy, the question might also be posed for the “status” of avant-garde art, which re-utilizes artistic “resources” in order to criticize the institution of art. As in *bricolage*, such a form of language and/or mode of writing as “discourse” thereby becomes, both in art and in science, “a problem of *economy* and *strategy*.”¹¹²

The “question” of a discourse that deconstructs discourse likewise (pro)poses a “problem” for philosophy, namely, how to think *outside* or *beyond* philosophy. The (re)solution would appear to be that “the passage beyond philosophy does not consist in turning the page of philosophy [...] but in continuing to read philosophers *in a certain way*.”¹¹³ Just as *bricolage* represents a language of language, a philosophy of philosophy that re-thinks the structure of structure would thereby emerge as an interpretation of interpretation, or “of structure, of sign, of play,” that ultimately “affirms play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism.”¹¹⁴ It is *there*, between opposing or contradictory

“interpretations of interpretation,” that Derrida comes *face to face* with an *other* thinking in an attempt to conceive of “the *differánce* of this irreducible difference.”¹¹⁵

Here there is a kind of question, let us still call it historical, whose *conception, formation, gestation, and labor* we are only catching a glimpse of today. I employ these words, I admit, with a glance toward the operations of childbearing – but also with a glance toward those who, in a society from which I do not exclude myself, turn their eyes away when faced by the as yet unnameable which is proclaiming itself and which can do so, as is necessary whenever a birth is in the offing, only under the species of the nonspecies, in the formless, mute, infant, and terrifying form of monstrosity.¹¹⁶

The “birth” of an *other* thinking, whose “conception” involves the difference of *difference*, would thus appear as a form of “monstrosity.” The “unnameable” has always already been named, however, and in both Europe and the Americas the *cannibal* has been designated as a (non) species of *humanimal*. Between the opposing or contradictory descriptions of the (Latin) American as both a “noble savage” and a barbarous cannibal, the re-emergence of *antropofagia* would, as such, signal not the “saddened, *negative*, nostalgic, guilty” side of “play,” in Derrida’s words, but rather its “other side,” namely, the “joyous affirmation of the play of the world and of the innocence of becoming, the affirmation of a world of signs without fault, without truth, and without origin which is offered to an active interpretation.”¹¹⁷ The “Cannibal Manifesto” actually recalls and/or previews such a “play” in its negation of humanism and the human sciences and its affirmation of a “reality without complexes, without madness, without prostitution, and without the penitentiaries of the matriarchy of Pindorama.” If deconstruction as a “double science” is the science of science, then a cannibal logic as an *other* thinking thereby becomes the cannibalism of cannibalism.

Once dis-placed in the context of post-structuralism, a cannibal logic not only relates to the “double science” described by deconstruction but also to a “nomad science” defined by deterritorialization, a process that Canclini would relate to hybridization. The term

detrterritorialization was conceived by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), a critique of the relations between “capitalism” and “schizophrenia,” in order to designate a process related to *decodification*. In terms of language and/or writing, *detrterritorialization* would as such involve the decodification of signs into an *other* design, or the decontextualization of texts into an *other* context, and might therefore correspond to the technique of *bricolage* that represents the productions of (cultural) cannibalism. Just as Derrida re-interprets *bricolage* in relation to a “structure of structures” in order to contrast the science of ethnology with the human sciences, Deleuze and Guattari re-consider *bricolage* in relation to the “production of production” in order to oppose a *schizoanalysis* to psychoanalysis:

The schizophrenic is the universal producer. There is no need to distinguish here between producing and its product. We need merely note that the pure ‘thisness’ of the object produced is carried over into a new act of producing [...] When Claude Lévi-Strauss defines *bricolage*, he does so in terms of a set of closely related characteristics: the possession of a stock of materials or of rules of thumb that are fairly extensive, though more or less a hodgepodge—multiple and at the same time limited; the ability to rearrange fragments continually in new and different patterns or configurations; and as a consequence, an indifference toward the act of producing and toward the product, toward the set of instruments to be used and toward the over-all result to be achieved [...] The rule of continually producing production, of grafting producing onto the product, is a characteristic of desiring machines or of primary production: the production of production.¹¹⁸

As an example of an *other* science, the theory and practice of *bricolage* thus relates to both deconstruction and *detrterritorialization*. If Levi-Strauss, in *The Savage Mind*, poses the question of a “prior” science in relation to modern science, Deleuze and Guattari, in “Nomadology: The War Machine,” propose the problem of a “nomad” or “minor science” in relation to a “royal,” “imperial,” and/or “State” science:

There is a kind of science, or treatment of science, that seems very difficult to classify, whose history is even difficult to follow. What we are referring to are

not “technologies” in the usual sense of the term. But neither are they “sciences” in the royal or legal sense established by history.¹¹⁹

What Deleuze elsewhere designates, in relation to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, as a “nomad thought” is thus presented as neither a *science* nor a *technology* but rather an *other* thinking that is both within and without a “history.” Such a “conception of science” is essentially “bound up” with a likewise nomadic “war machine.”¹²⁰

It would seem that the war machine is projected into an abstract knowledge formally different from the one that doubles the State apparatus. It would seem that a whole nomad science develops eccentrically, one that is very different from the royal or imperial sciences. Furthermore, this nomad science is continually “barred,” inhibited or banned by the demands and conditions of State science [...] The fact is that the two kinds of science have different modes of formalization, and State science continually imposes its form of sovereignty on the inventions of nomad science.¹²¹

As an “abstract knowledge” formulated as *difference*, an *eccentric* “nomad science” is subordinated to an imperial “State” science. Inasmuch as the “war machine” is said to be “exterior to the State apparatus,” it would furthermore appear to be “irreducible to the State apparatus, to be outside its sovereignty and prior to its law,” since “it comes from elsewhere.”¹²² As such, the “war machine” is ultimately described in terms of a *other* “relations.”

He bears witness, above all, to other relations with women, with animals, because he sees all things in relations of *becoming*, rather than implementing binary distributions between “states”: a veritable becoming-animal of the warrior, a becoming-woman, which lies outside the dualities of terms as well as correspondences between relations. In every respect, the war machine is of another species, another nature, another origin than the State apparatus.¹²³

From the (dis)position of *otherness*, it is from a *space-in-between* opposing states that emerges “the flash of the war machine, arriving from without.”¹²⁴ Both the “originality” and the “eccentricity” of the “war machine,” or in the figure of the “man of war,” would as such be represented, from the perspective of a “State” science, in the “negative” forms of

“stupidity, deformity, madness, illegitimacy, usurpation, sin.” Arising from a *beyond within*, the “war machine” is ultimately characterized in terms of its “exteriority” and its “irreducibility.”¹²⁵

If the “exteriority” of the “war machine” is “*first attested to in mythology, epic, drama, and games*,” as Deleuze and Guattari propose, it is “*also attested to by ethnology*” and by “*epistemology, which intimates the existence and perpetuation of a ‘nomad’ or ‘minor’ science*.”¹²⁶ The passage from mythology to ethnology, and finally, to epistemology might be followed via the dis-location of the “war machine” in the myth of the Amazons, a “Stateless woman-people [...] organized uniquely in a war mode,” who, like the “man of war,” are said to “spring forth like lightning, ‘between’ the two States.”¹²⁷ The “collective law” of the Amazons is furthermore described as a “law of the pack that prohibits [...] entering into one-to-one relationships or binary distinctions.”¹²⁸ It is therefore not a mode of *being* but of *becoming* that defines the *otherness* of the Amazons, who would eventually be re(dis)covered in the emblematic figure of a New World. Such a becoming-*other* would actually represent both a “becoming-woman” and a “becoming-animal of the warrior” via the transfiguration of the Amazons into the *cannibals* of America. Both mythology and ethnology, therefore, would attest to the “exteriority” of a “war machine” that is characterized by *otherness*. With the demise of such mythological and/or ethnological figures, Deleuze and Guattari wonder whether the “war machine” actually assumes “new forms,” and thereby re-affirms its “irreducibility” and “exteriority:”

Could it be that it is at the moment the war machine ceases to exist, conquered by the State, that it displays to the utmost its irreducibility, that it scatters into thinking, loving, dying, or creating machines that have at their disposal vital or revolutionary powers capable of challenging the conquering State? Is the war machine already overtaken, condemned, appropriated as part of the same process whereby it takes on new forms, undergoes a metamorphosis, affirms

its irreducibility and exteriority, and deploys that milieu of pure exteriority that the occidental man of the State, or the occidental thinker, continually reduces to something other than itself?¹²⁹

The “occidental” thinker has indeed, in the (dis)course of history, continually reduced both the *barbarian* and the *primitive* “war machine” to something “other than itself.” Both outside and within a (western) culture defined by Occidentalism, both are not only “overtaken,” “condemned,” and/or “appropriated,” but are also transformed into “thinking” and/or “creating machines” with “revolutionary powers.” If, as Deleuze and Guattari assert, “the war machine is realized more completely in the ‘barbaric’ assemblages of nomadic warriors than in the ‘savage’ assemblages of primitive societies,” then the so-called “Alexandrian barbarians” of Latin America, along with their “anthropophagic reason,” may be said to further realize the aesthetic and/or poetic revolution of a modernist primitivism.¹³⁰ An epistemology in the formulation of an *other* thinking or “mode of thought,” therefore, would also attest to the “eccentricity” of a “war machine” that is characterized by *difference*. As Deleuze and Guattari conclude, “an ‘ideological,’ scientific, or artistic movement can be a potential war machine.”¹³¹ Accordingly, the vanguard movements of *modernismo*, *concretismo*, and/or *tropicalismo* would thereby represent such a “war machine” in the form of an *antropofagia* that, due to its exteriority, eccentricity and/or irreducibility, relates to a *nomadology* founded on deterritorialization inasmuch as the *nomad* enacts processes of decodification. Just as the cannibal has been trans-figured within an assemblage of configurations, the nomad is likewise re-characterized in a “constellation” of characteristics:

It is not the nomad who defines this constellation of characteristics; it is this constellation that defines the nomad, and at the same time the essence of the war machine. If guerrilla warfare, minority warfare, revolutionary and popular war are in conformity with the essence, it is because they take war as an object all the more necessary for being merely “supplementary:” *they can make war only on the condition that they simultaneously create something else.*¹³²

In dialogue with both post-structuralist and post-colonialist discourses of *difference*, a post-modernist cannibal logic of *otherness* represents both a form of deconstruction and a form of deterritorialization. Not so (co)incidentally, the return to (cultural) cannibalism by the (neo)vanguard movements of *concretismo* and *tropicalismo* would occur at the very moment of the movement(s) for the decolonization of the Third World, which would reflect both the *cause* and the *effect* of a decentering of Eurocentrism. In the New World, where the emergence of “dependency theory” would force a reconsideration of the relations between Europe and a Latin America *under* development, the convergence of the counter-discourses of deconstruction and decolonization would eventually inspire a theory of “border thinking” that re-thinks the “colonial difference” from the perspective of “subaltern knowledges,” which would include the ex-centric viewpoint of an “anthropophagic reason.” In *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (2000), the Argentine critic Walter D. Mignolo re-draws the map of modernity in order to define the “colonial difference” as both “the space where the coloniality of power is enacted” and “the space where the restitution of subaltern knowledge is taking place and where border thinking is emerging.”¹³³ The “colonial difference” specifically refers to the encounter and/or “confrontation” between colonized “local histories,” such as the *primitive* traditions of the Americas, and colonizing “global designs,” such as the *modern* traditions of Europe. As a form of modernist primitivism, *antropofagia* would thus represent, in Mignolo’s words, a “border thinking at the intersection of the ‘barbarian’ and the ‘civilized,’ as the subaltern perspective appropriates and rethinks the double articulation of ‘barbarian’ and ‘civilized’ knowledge.”¹³⁴

The emergence of “border thinking,” according to Mignolo, is “a logical consequence of the colonial difference.”¹³⁵ Such an *other* thinking would also reflect the confluence of post-structuralism and post-colonialism via the interrelations between the theories of deconstruction and decolonization. For Mignolo, decolonization is “imbedded” in “border thinking” as a means of “transcending the colonial difference,” while deconstruction is a critique “of and from modern epistemology more concerned with the Western hegemonic constructions than with the colonial difference.”¹³⁶ The goal of deconstruction is therefore an *analysis* of modernity, while the aim of decolonization is the *paralysis* of coloniality. Ultimately, Mignolo adds, deconstruction “needs to be decolonized from the silences of history” just as decolonization “needs to be deconstructed from the perspective from the coloniality of power.”¹³⁷ As such, deconstruction and decolonization are *complementary* and not supplementary discourses in relation to the decentering of Eurocentrism. In his discussion of Derrida, Mignolo notes that deconstruction does not posit a “science” or “discipline” but instead (pro)poses “a critical position vis-à-vis scientific and disciplinary knowledge.”¹³⁸ Such a “*double science*,” as Derrida himself observes, would involve the “*overturning*” of the “violent” hierarchy of classical philosophy, its “conflictual and subordinating structure of opposition.”¹³⁹ Mignolo thereby relates the “task” of deconstruction, which applies to philosophical and scientific oppositions, to the “task” of decolonization, which applies to political, economic, social, and cultural oppositions:

Now, since colonial discourse established itself in the constant and charged construction of hierarchical oppositions, deconstructing colonial discourse is indeed a necessary task. There is, however, another related task that goes beyond the analysis and deconstruction of colonial discourse and the principle of Western metaphysics underlining it. I am referring here to the colonial difference, the intersection between Western metaphysics and the multiple non-Western principles governing modes of thinking of local histories that have been entering into contact and conflict with Western thoughts in the past

five hundred years in the Americas [...] To extend deconstruction beyond Western metaphysics or to assume that there is nothing else than Western metaphysics will be a move similar to colonizing global designs under the belief of the pretense of the improvement of humanity [...] Grammatology and deconstruction have vis-à-vis the colonial experience the same limitations as Marxism vis-à-vis race and indigenous communities in the colonized world: the colonial difference is invisible to them. Decolonization should be thought of as complementary to deconstruction and border thinking, complementary to the “double séance” within the experience and sensibilities of the colonality of power.¹⁴⁰

In addition to relating a “border thinking” of decolonization to the “double science” of deconstruction, Mignolo also compares and contrasts “an other thinking” with a “nomad science,” which is said to be “related to science and thinking beyond science.”¹⁴¹ Just as Derrida’s “double science” is criticized for being “blind” to the confrontations of the “colonial difference,” Deleuze and Guattari’s “nomad science” is criticized for being “blind” to the conflicts of “coloniality:”

Thus, nomadology is a universal statement from a local history, while an other thinking is a universal statement from two local histories, intertwined by the colonality of power [...] There is no reduction of “an other thinking” to nomadology and vice versa. Both are entrenched in local histories: nomadology is a universal history told from a local one; “an other thinking” is a universal history of the modern/colonial world system that implies the complementarity of modernity and colonality, of modern colonialism [...] and colonial modernities, in their diverse rhythms, temporalities, with nations and religions coming to conflict at different periods and in different world orders.¹⁴²

As “universal” statements from “local” histories, the most “striking” differences between a *nomad thought* and “an other thinking” are ultimately related to the differences between deconstruction and decolonization, inasmuch as the former is developed from the perspective of modernity, while the latter is developed from the perspective of colonality

From the perspective of the “colonial difference” and/or of a “subaltern reason,” *other* modes of thinking, such as transculturation and hybridization, would as such become, for

Mignolo, “the needed categories to undo the subalternization of knowledge and to look for ways of thinking beyond the categories of Western thought.”¹⁴³ Although such discourses have been “instrumental for a critique of subalternization of knowledge,” these conceptions are not without limitations and/or limits, which a “border thinking” would attempt to overcome and/or surpass. For instance, Ortiz’s theory of transculturation is read by Mignolo as “an important step toward border thinking, although the borders that Ortiz erased exist in the object of study, not in the knowing subject.”¹⁴⁴ As such, transculturation is said to take place “in the enunciated and not in the locus of enunciation.”¹⁴⁵ Mignolo would nonetheless become interested in “looking at transculturation from the realm of signs, rather than from that of people’s miscegenation, and in displacing it toward the understanding of border thinking and the colonial difference.”¹⁴⁶ Although it actually dis-locates “signs” in terms of a split subject of enunciation, Bhabha’s theory of hybridization would likewise not account for the “fractured locus of enunciation” of a “subaltern perspective.”¹⁴⁷ For Mignolo, “border thinking” is not merely a “hybrid enunciation” but is also a “fractured enunciation in dialogic situations” *between* center and periphery.¹⁴⁸ In the end, the emergence of the post-colonial discourse of Bhabha and others is also criticized for “piggybacking” on post-modern and/or post-structuralist theories that originated within Europe, the *locus* of the “modern/colonial world.”¹⁴⁹

In contrast to post-modern and/or post-colonial discourses developed from the territory of modernity and/or coloniality, “border thinking” emerges from “the exterior borders of the modern/colonial world system,” a system constituted as such only *after* the discovery and conquest of the Americas, in order to absorb and displace “hegemonic forms of knowledge into the perspective of the subaltern,” as Mignolo observes.¹⁵⁰ Such a “border

thinking” is not, however, “a new form of syncretism or hybridity,” but rather “an intense battlefield in the long history of colonial subalternization of knowledge and legitimation of the colonial difference.”¹⁵¹ The “long process” of “subalternization,” according to Mignolo, is now being “radically transformed by new forms of knowledge in which what has been subalternized and considered interesting only as object of study becomes articulated as new loci of enunciation.”¹⁵² The emergence of a “border thinking” thus reflects the re(dis)covery of “the force and creativity” of a subaltern reason or knowledge that was *subjugated* and/or *subordinated* during the “long process of colonization of the planet, which was at the same time the process in which modernity and the modern Reason were constructed.”¹⁵³ As the articulation of “new forms of knowledge” from “new loci of enunciation,” a “border thinking” thus re-views modernity in terms of its *other* side of coloniality, as the *differánce* of deconstruction becomes the “colonial difference” of decolonization. Mignolo thereby differentiates the “machine” of “border thinking” from a “territorial” and a “subaltern” perspective:

Border thinking can only be such from a subaltern perspective, never from a territorial (e.g., from inside modernity) one. Border thinking from a territorial perspective becomes a machine of appropriation of the colonial differ/a/ences; the colonial difference as an object of study rather than as an epistemic potential. Border thinking from the perspective of subalternity is a machine for intellectual decolonization.¹⁵⁴

Yes, the subaltern *thinks*, from the perspective of the “colonial difference,” where an *other* logic or reason is dis-located at the margins of Eurocentrism and modernity. Yet, rather than re-draw the outline(s) of Europe and Latin America, the Old World and the New World, or the First World and the Third World, an *other* thinking re-thinks the (colonial) *difference* from an ambivalent (non) *space-in-between* such oppositions. As Mignolo concludes, the “key configuration” of “border thinking” is “*thinking from dichotomous concepts rather than*

ordering the world in dichotomies.”¹⁵⁵ Or, in *other* words, “border thinking” is “logically, a dichotomous locus of enunciation and, historically, is located at the borders (interiors or exteriors) of the modern/colonial world system.”¹⁵⁶ As such, “border thinking” conceives of *difference* or *otherness* as a *prescription* rather than a *description*, and as a point of *departure* rather than a line of *partition*.

At the “borders” of the *modern* world, an otherwise *primitive* practice of (cultural) cannibalism, hereby designated as an “anthropophagic reason,” would ultimately, from the perspective of “subalternity,” represent a form of “border thinking” *par excellence*. From the point of view of the “bad savage,” the “devourer of whites,” or the “cannibal,” which would not involve a “submission” or “indoctrination,” but a “transculturation,” the “new barbarians,” with an anti-tradition in “counterpoint” to logocentrism, devour a universal “cultural heritage” with an “ex-centrifing and deconstructing attack” characterized by a savage “hybridization.”¹⁵⁷ Accordingly, Mignolo relates the *antropofagia* of both Oswald de Andrade and Haroldo de Campos to a “border thinking” that dissolves, rather than resolves, the oppositions between “barbarism” and “civilization.”

Border thinking is not a counterculture, but the denial of the denial of “barbarism;” not a Hegelian synthesis, but the absorption of the “civilizing” principles into the “civilization of barbarism:” a “phagocytosis” of civilization by the barbarian [...] rather than the barbarian bending and entering civilization. It is also an act of “antropofagia” [...] What we are facing here are no longer spaces in between or hybridity, in the convivial images of contact zones, but the forces of the “barbarian” theorizing and rationality [...] integrating and superseding the restrictive logic behind the idea of “civilization” by giving rise to what the civilizing mission repressed: the self-appropriation of all the good qualities that were denied to the barbarians.¹⁵⁸

Inasmuch as “border thinking” is “also” an “act” of *antropofagia*, which is likewise characterized by “denial,” “barbarism,” “absorption,” and “appropriation,” a cannibal logic is thereby the re-action of an *other* logic that thinks both *beyond* and *within* conceptions of the

barbarian *and/or* civilized, the modern *and/or* primitive, the original *and/or* imitative, the European *and/or* Latin American, etc. As Mignolo observes, oppositions such as “inside and outside, center and periphery” are always already *constructions* of modernity and/or coloniality. As such, the ultimate “horizon” of “border thinking” not only critiques such oppositions, but also re(ad)dresses both “the subalternization of knowledges” and “the colonial difference:”

The last horizon of border thinking is not only working toward a critique of colonial categories; it is also redressing the subalternization of knowledges and the coloniality of power. It also points toward a new way of thinking in which dichotomies can be replaced by the complementarity of apparently contradictory terms. Border thinking could open the doors to an other tongue, an other thinking, an other logic superceding the long history of the modern/colonial world, the coloniality of power, the subalternization of knowledges and the colonial difference.¹⁵⁹

At the gates of a utopian (Latin) America, in the ex-centric (non) *space-in-between* of the (colonial) *difference* and/or *otherness*, the emblematic figure of the cannibal returns under the *sign* of an *other* language and/or writing, of an *other* logic and/or thinking. Under the (dis)guise of transculturation, hybridization, deconstruction, deterritorialization, and decolonization, the form(ul)ation of a cannibal logic thus marks the new poetry and the new cinema of the new barbarians of a new civilization in the New World.

Why *antropofagia* over *mestizaje*, creolization, transculturation, and/or hybridization? Why an “anthropophagic reason” over deconstruction, deterritorialization, and/or decolonization? Why a Latin America under the sign of an *other* thinking? In a sense, a cannibal logic represents the superficial assimilation of such theorizations, while in an *other* sense, it presents a radical differentiation via the nominal invocation of violence. Without such a violence, a cannibal logic would have no *teeth*, so to speak. In “On Violence,” Frantz Fanon describes decolonization as “a violent event” and defines it to be “the substitution of one ‘species’ of mankind by another.”¹⁶⁰ Such a “substitution” would occur not via the natural evolution of the human being but via the cultural revolution of a “new” human *becoming*. Decolonization, “which sets out to change the order of the world,” is not only “an agenda for total disorder” but also “a historical process,” according to Fanon, and therefore “it can only be understood, it can only find its significance and become self coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it form and substance.”¹⁶¹ As a historical and cultural mo(ve)ment, decolonization thus bears the (double) mark of a “new rhythm,” a “new generation, a “new language,” and a “new humanity:”

Decolonization never goes unnoticed, for it focuses on and fundamentally alters being, and transforms the spectator crushed to a nonessential state into a privileged actor, captured in a virtually grandiose fashion by the spotlight of History. It infuses a new rhythm, specific to a new generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity. Decolonization is truly the creation of new men. But such a creation cannot be attributed to a supernatural power. The ‘thing’ colonized becomes a man through the very process of liberation.¹⁶²

As a response to Jean-Paul Sartre's existential humanism, Fanon's "new" humanism would thereby envision a "new day," "new issues," a "new direction," and a "new history of man" that dis-places Europe *under* the perspective of a New (Third) World.¹⁶³ In order not to want to "transform" Africa and/or America into a new Europe, but to want "humanity" to *take* "one step forward," to *take* it to an *other* "level" from which it was dis-placed, there must be innovation via revolution.¹⁶⁴ As Fanon finally declares, in the conclusion to *The Wretched of the Earth*: "For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must make a new start, develop a new way of thinking, and endeavor to create a new man."¹⁶⁵ For Latin America and/or a New World, then, we must also make an *other* beginning, develop an *other* way of thinking, and endeavor to create an *other* man. As such, the *renewal* of violence in the formulation of a cannibal logic represents the sign of such an *other* thinking, which becomes a strategy for intellectual and cultural decolonization. The aim is not to decolonize culture, *per se*, but the production(s) of culture via a revolution in the *form* and *content* of the arts. The emergence of a new poetry and a new cinema would thus ultimately exemplify the realization of a new language and/or writing by the new barbarians of a new civilization.

¹ See: Haroldo de Campos, "The Rule of Anthropophagy: Europe Under the Sign of Devoration," trans. Maria Tai Wolff, *Latin American Literary Review* 14:27 (1986), 42-60, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20119404>.

² Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís (Durham, NC, USA: Duke University Press, 1995), 98.

³ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*, 98.

⁴ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*, 98.

⁵ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*, 102-103.

⁶ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*, 103.

⁷ Quoted in Ángel Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1987), 33.

⁸ Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina*, 33-34.

⁹ Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina*, 38.

¹⁰ Campos, "The Rule of Anthropophagy," 55.

¹¹ Sara Castro-Klarén, "A Genealogy for the 'Manifesto antropófago,' or the Struggle between Socrates and the Caraiibe," *Nepantla: Views from South* 1.2 (2000), 296-297.

¹² Castro-Klarén, "A Genealogy for the 'Manifesto antropófago,'" 297.

¹³ See: Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?," in *Twentieth century literary theory: an introductory anthology*, ed. Vassilis Lambropoulos and David Neal Miller (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 136.

¹⁴ Foucault, "What is an Author?," 137; Castro-Klarén, "A Genealogy for the 'Manifesto antropófago,'" 297.

¹⁵ Castro-Klarén, "A Genealogy for the 'Manifesto antropófago,'" 297.

¹⁶ Castro-Klarén, "A Genealogy for the 'Manifesto antropófago,'" 297-298.

¹⁷ Oswald de Andrade, "Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto," trans. Maria do Carmo Zanini (2006), <http://www.sibila.com.br/index.php/sibila-english/395-anthropophagic-manifesto>.

¹⁸ Campos, "The Rule of Anthropophagy," 44.

¹⁹ Benedito Nunes, "A antropofagia ao alcance de todos," in Oswald de Andrade, *A utopia antropofágica* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 2001), 15.

²⁰ Castro-Klarén, "A Genealogy for the 'Manifesto antropófago,'" 298.

²¹ See: Abril Trigo, "Shifting Paradigms: From Transculturation to Hybridity: A Theoretical Critique," in *Unforeseeable Americas: Questioning Cultural Hybridity in the Americas*, ed. Rita De Grandis and Zilá Bernd (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, Critical Studies 13, 2000), 143-157.

²² Néstor García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Exiting Modernity*, trans. Christopher L. Chiappari and Sílvia L. López (Minneapolis, MN., USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), xxv.

²³ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxv.

²⁴ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxviii.

²⁵ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxix.

²⁶ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxii.

²⁷ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxiii.

²⁸ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxiii.

²⁹ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 11.

³⁰ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxiv.

³¹ Renato Rosaldo, foreword to *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Exiting Modernity*, by Néstor García Canclini, trans. Christopher L. Chiappari and Sílvia L. López (Minneapolis, MN., USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), xiv.

³² Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 11.

³³ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 6.

³⁴ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 6.

³⁵ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 9.

³⁶ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 41.

³⁷ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 41.

³⁸ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 43-44.

³⁹ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 47.

⁴⁰ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 50.

⁴¹ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 50.

⁴² Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 50.

⁴³ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 50.

⁴⁴ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 51

⁴⁵ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 51

⁴⁶ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 52.

⁴⁷ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 207.

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- ⁴⁸ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 223; 229.
- ⁴⁹ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 229.
- ⁵⁰ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 224.
- ⁵¹ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 238-239.
- ⁵² Andrade, "Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto."
- ⁵³ Andrade, "Anthropophagous [Anthropophagic] Manifesto."
- ⁵⁴ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, 242.
- ⁵⁵ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxi.
- ⁵⁶ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxi.
- ⁵⁷ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 153.
- ⁵⁸ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 158.
- ⁵⁹ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 159.
- ⁶⁰ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 159.
- ⁶¹ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 159-160.
- ⁶² Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 160.
- ⁶³ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 162.
- ⁶⁴ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 162.
- ⁶⁵ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 162.
- ⁶⁶ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 162.
- ⁶⁷ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 162-163.
- ⁶⁸ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 163.
- ⁶⁹ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 164.
- ⁷⁰ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 164-165.
- ⁷¹ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 165.
- ⁷² Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 165.
- ⁷³ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 172.

⁷⁴ See: Alberto Moreiras, "Hybridity and Double Consciousness," *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC, USA: Duke University Press, 2001), 264-300; See also: Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxxi-xxxii.

⁷⁵ Alberto Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC, USA: Duke University Press, 2001), 291.

⁷⁶ Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference*, 293-294.

⁷⁷ Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference*, 294.

⁷⁸ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 44.

⁷⁹ Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference*, 295.

⁸⁰ See: Michael Syrotinski, *Deconstruction and the postcolonial: at the limits of theory* (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 2007).

⁸¹ Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 154.

⁸² Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 154.

⁸³ Jacques Derrida, *The Double Session*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 193.

⁸⁴ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 45.

⁸⁵ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 45.

⁸⁶ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 45.

⁸⁷ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 46.

⁸⁸ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 46.

⁸⁹ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 46.

⁹⁰ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 49-50.

⁹¹ Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 50.

⁹² Campos, "Rule of Anthropophagy," 50.

⁹³ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 16-17.

⁹⁴ Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind*. 17.

⁹⁵ Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind*. 17.

⁹⁶ Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind*. 17.

⁹⁷ Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind*. 18.

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- ⁹⁸ Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind*. 18.
- ⁹⁹ Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind*. 19.
- ¹⁰⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 285.
- ¹⁰¹ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 285.
- ¹⁰² Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 285.
- ¹⁰³ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 286.
- ¹⁰⁴ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 286.
- ¹⁰⁵ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 278.
- ¹⁰⁶ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 280.
- ¹⁰⁷ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 280.
- ¹⁰⁸ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 280.
- ¹⁰⁹ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 282.
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- ¹¹² Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 282.
- ¹¹³ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 288.
- ¹¹⁴ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 292.
- ¹¹⁵ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 293.
- ¹¹⁶ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 293.
- ¹¹⁷ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 292.
- ¹¹⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 7.
- ¹¹⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 361.
- ¹²⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 362.
- ¹²¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 362.
- ¹²² Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 351-352.
- ¹²³ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 352 .

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- ¹²⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 353.
- ¹²⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 353-354.
- ¹²⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 351; 357; 361.
- ¹²⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 355.
- ¹²⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 355.
- ¹²⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 356.
- ¹³⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 359.
- ¹³¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 422.
- ¹³² Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 423.
- ¹³³ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, ix.
- ¹³⁴ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 44.
- ¹³⁵ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, x.
- ¹³⁶ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 323.
- ¹³⁷ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 324.
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- ¹³⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, USA: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 41.
- ¹⁴⁰ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 326.
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- ¹⁴² Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 73-74.
- ¹⁴³ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 326.
- ¹⁴⁴ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 167.
- ¹⁴⁵ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 167.
- ¹⁴⁶ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 15.
- ¹⁴⁷ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, x.
- ¹⁴⁸ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, x.
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- ¹⁵⁰ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 11-12.

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- ¹⁵² Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 13.
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- ¹⁵⁸ Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*, 303-304.
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- ¹⁶² Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 2.
- ¹⁶³ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 235-239.
- ¹⁶⁴ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 239.
- ¹⁶⁵ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 239.

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